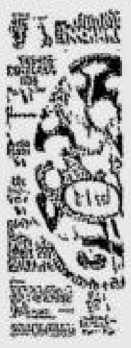
ERC grants Meralco rate hike of 8.76¢ per kWh

Story on PAGE A7

Junior INQUIRER SPECIAL TO KIDS



Junior INQUIRER Special goes broadsheet and nationwide starting today and every last Saturday of the month. Check it out inside your INQUIRER copy today.

On other Saturdays, JI stays in Metro, and is exclusively available in selected Metro Manila schools for kids from 6 to 96.

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email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph
Saturday, May 31, 2003 ★★ 102 pages / 11 sections / vol. 18 / no. 172 P15
website: www.inq7.net

Investors gung-ho on RP, say US solons

ERIK ARAZAS

GOOD news, including businessmen's approval of her economic governance, gives the President a good laugh during the joint meeting of business organizations at the Dusit Hotel, where she also briefed her audience on the positive results of her state visit to the States.

Ricciardone counters Japanese ambassador

By Norman Bordadora and Carlito Pablo

TAKE it from US Ambassador Francis Ricciardone: The Philippines is a safe haven for foreign investors and tourists.

"Will I bring two US senators here if I didn't think the Philippines was safe? I don't think so," Ricciardone said yesterday at the Department of Foreign Affairs. He was escorting Senators Chuck Hagel and Jack Reed, who also paid a courtesy call on President Macapagal-Arroyo earlier in the day.

The good news that the senators brought to the Palace was that American businessmen were gung-ho about expanding their investments in the Philippines, particularly after Ms Macapagal's successful state visit to the United States.

Ricciardone made the remark a day after Japanese Ambassador Kojiro Takano told foreign correspondents that fears for his safety had prevented him from having a good night's sleep, and that conflicting policies and a gaping budget deficit were turning away investors.

Foreign Undersecretary Franklin Ebdalin said in a news conference that Takano had apologized for what the envoy said were "personal observations and impressions."

Ebdalin, currently acting foreign secretary, said he had summoned Takano to the DFA "to call his attention to the statement he made, which is an exaggeration."

Takano later avoided journalists by slipping out a fire exit, Reuters said.

The DFA nevertheless handed Takano a *note verbale* to protest his remarks. But Ebdalin said there might be no need to declare the envoy *persona non grata*, as Sen. Manuel Villar Jr. had urged, be-

INVESTORS/A18

'If economy remains good, GMA should run'

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

BUSINESSMEN want President Macapagal-Arroyo to leave the door open to the possibility of seeking election in 2004, especially if the economy maintains its winning streak.

"If the economy remains as good as it is now in the next few months, I don't see any reason why she should not run," said Robin Sy, president of the Federation of Filipino Chinese Chambers of Commerce of the Philippines Inc.

The Philippine economy proved resilient in the face of the US-Iraq war, the conflict in certain parts of Mindanao and the extended drought. The gross domestic product grew by 4.5 percent in the first quarter of this year—the high end of the government's projections—up from 3.8 percent a year ago.

If the President sustains the momentum of the economy's robust performance, she should seriously consider running for office, according to Norberto Viera, president of the Semiconductors and Electronic Industries Association of the Philippines Inc.

Viera, who is also president of the Philippine operations of US electronics giant Texas Instruments, said most businessmen were satisfied with Ms Macapagal's han-

IF ECONOMY/A18

Redeployment of US forces in Asia 'necessary'

By Norman Bordadora

WILL the United States move some of its troops out of Okinawa, Japan and back to the Philippines?

A day after The Los Angeles Times reported that the United States was planning a broad realignment of its forces in Asia, two US senators visiting Manila said yesterday such a redeployment was necessary.

The Los Angeles Times also reported that the United States was mulling an increase in the number of US troops in Singapore and Malaysia; and seeking agreements to base Navy ships in Vietnamese waters and station ground troops in the Philippines.

But Senators Chuck Hagel and Jack Reed stopped short of saying American

REDEPLOYMENT/A18

GMA: MILF truce tactical ploy, ruse

By Armand N. Nocum and Christine O. Avendaño

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday rejected the 10-day unilateral ceasefire offered by the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, saying military operations against the MILF would continue.

She said the truce offer, slated to start on June 2, was merely a "tactical ploy" to buy the rebels time amid a military onslaught.

"We will not stand for double talk. It is clear at this time, that the declaration of a ceasefire by the MILF is a ploy and a tactical ruse. Unless proof of sincerity is shown, punitive actions will continue," the President told reporters.

Catholic bishops, meanwhile, have received the assurance of the MILF leadership and their field commanders that some 210,000 evacuees in various evacuation centers in Mindanao will be allowed "safe return and rehabilitation."

Archbishop Orlando Quevedo, president of the influential Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines, asked the military to also ensure the safe return of the evacuees.

Quevedo issued the appeal in a statement, two days after the MILF offered the 10-day unilateral truce.

Presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye said Malacañang had received a formal notice of the MILF offer.

GMA/A18

Earning only ₱6,000, frogmen saved 182 lives

By Luige del Puerto

COAST Guard frogman Reynaldo Godoy was on a date with his wife last Sunday when he learned that the MV San Nicolas had sunk in Manila Bay after a collision with Super Ferry 12.

"I have to go," he told his wife.

"Be careful. Remember you have a family to come back to," his wife bade him goodbye.

Divers like Godoy, who earn a basic pay of only P6,000, not only make personal sacrifices and risk their lives and limbs when they participate in rescue missions, such as that for the passengers of MV San Nicolas. When they return to their barracks at the Farola Compound in Binondo, Manila, for a much-deserved rest, they still have to contend with the leaking roof.

When the INQUIRER went to the barracks last Wednesday to interview the frogmen-rescuers, their sleeping quarters was dripping wet from the rains caused by typhoon "Chedeng." The ceiling, already rotted by constant exposure to water, was about to collapse.

"Welcome to our home. It only drips here when it rains," one of the frogmen could still joke.

But discomfort is the least of their worries.

Last Sunday, they battled an unforgiv-

EARNING/A19

RANDY HORMILLOSA

BELINDA CUNANAN, PDI columnist: Hall of Fame awardee

AMANDO DORONILA, PDI editorial consultant, columnist: Hall of Fame awardee.

JERRY ESPLANADA: Best Investigative Reporter of the Year

Rotary Club of Manila honors 5 PDI journalists

THE ROTARY Club of Manila honored journalists the other night, including five from the INQUIRER: analyst Amando Doronila, columnists Belinda Olivares-Cunanan, Conrado de Quiros and Ninfa Leonardia and reporter Jerry Esplanada.

Doronila and Cunanan were elevated to the Rotary Club's First Journalism Awards Hall of Fame.

The 84-year-old civic organization, the first Rotary Club in Asia, named De Quiros "Opinion Writer of the Year" and Esplanada "Investigative Reporter of the Year."

It also gave Leonardia a special citation as publisher and owner of the Bacolod City-based Visayan Daily Star, named by the club as an outstanding regional newspaper.

De Quiros and Esplanada each received P50,000 in cash and a trophy during awarding ceremonies at the Manila Hotel.

Howie Severino of GMA-7 was named "Broadcast Journalist of the Year," while BusinessWorld, whose founder and editor in chief, Raul Locsin, passed away only last week, was named "Newspaper of the Year."

Other awardees inducted into the Hall of Fame were Maximo Soliven, publisher

ROTARY/A17

WALANG KAPALIT

Kiko, Sharon to honeymoon in Boston

By Christine O. Avendano

WHAT rumor? What issue?

The rumor is that the seven-year-old marriage of Sen. Francis "Kiko" Pangilinan to Sharon Cuneta is on the rocks.

A "non-issue," Pangilinan replied through text messages to the INQUIRER yesterday. And, he refused to dignify the rumor.

According to the talk, Cuneta had left the conjugal home in Wack Wack in Mandaluyong because Pangilinan had a girl friend in the Senate.

KIKO/A19

WEATHER FORECAST

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COMPILED BY: RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/05/31/03

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Biggest community

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In the Philippines, the health department assured the public there was no cause for alarm over the country's two new suspected SARS cases, saying both appeared to be negative for the virus.

The country's top epidemiologists, who gathered for a meeting the other day, noted that SARS had made people wary of inviting overseas Filipino workers to social events.

"People are now cautious about contracting the disease from those who have a history of travel to SARS-infected areas. They are now thinking twice about inviting OFWs to social gatherings," said the head of National Epidemiology Center, citing a common observation among DOH epidemiologists from all over the country.

OFWs shunned

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But Quizon said the shunning of OFWs—as wedding and baptism sponsors of choice for their dollar earnings—was working for the benefit of the country and the relatives of the returning OFWs.

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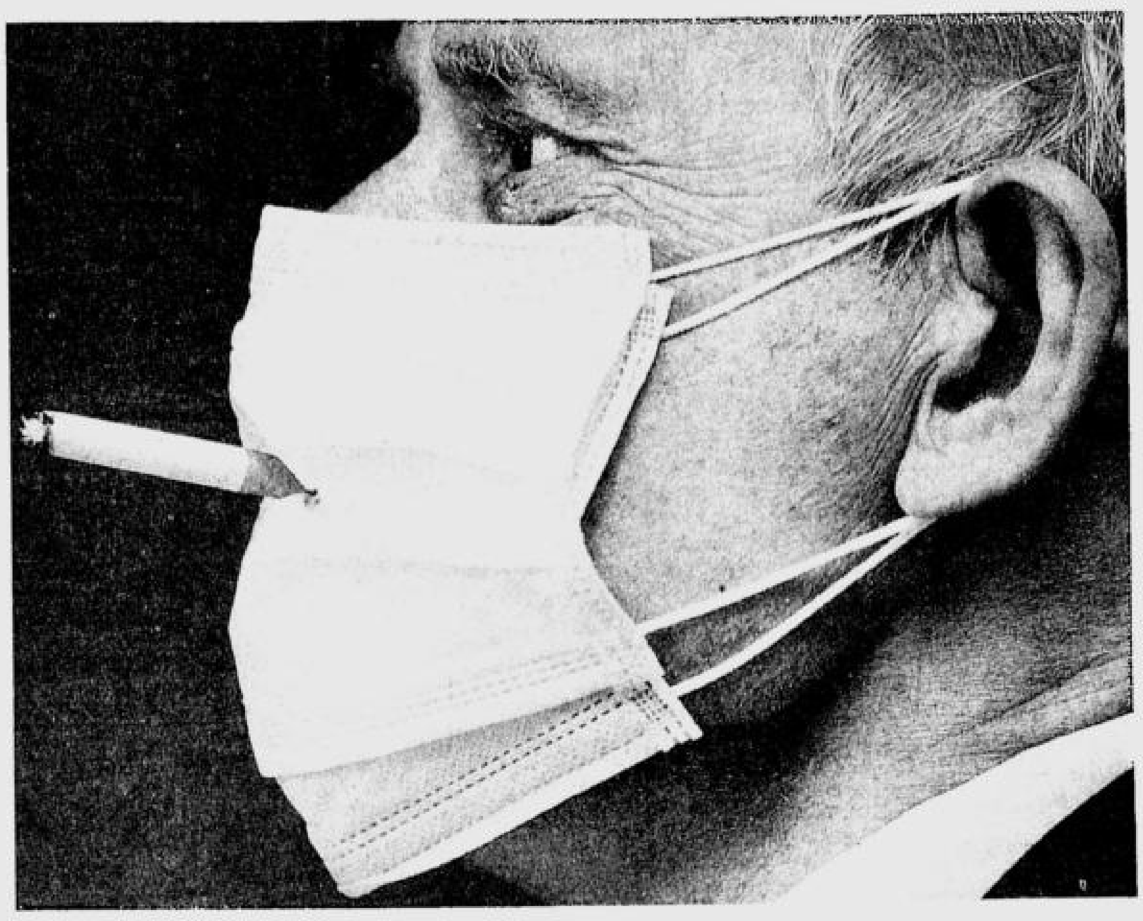

AP

PROTECTED AGAINST SARS BUT . . .
A surgeon outside St. Michael's Hospital in Toronto, who asked not to be identified, smokes a cigarette through a mask meant to protect against the renewed SARS outbreak in the city. The new SARS cases are confined at the North York General Hospital also in Toronto.

Chedeng leaves 37 dead, P72-M in initial damage

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More expensive veggies

Data from the DA showed that the retail price of vegetables in wet markets have significantly risen in the last three days.

A kilo of string beans now costs P60, when it was previously only P45 per kilo. Prices of eggplant and petchay are now higher by P5 per kilo.

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There was enough water in Angat and Magat to irrigate thousands of hectares of rice lands for the planting season which starts next month.

The water levels in the Ambuklao and Binga hydroelectric dams in Benguet were already near critical levels.

As of 7 a.m. yesterday, the water level in Ambuklao was 747.75 meters, which is less than five meters below the maximum of 752 meters. The water level in Binga was 570.21 meters, also less than five meters below the maximum level of 575 meters.

However, the water level in the San Roque dam was 257.02 meters, way below its maximum level of 290 meters. *Reports from Martin Marfil, Gerald Lacuarta, Christine Gaylican, Juan Escandor Jr. and Ronnie Lorejo, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau, Frank Cimatu, Jovelyn Reyes and Yolanda Fuertes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau, and Carmela Reyes, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Abu says ABS-CBN paid ransom for reporters

By TJ Burgonio

THE ABU Sayyaf received at least P5 million in ransom to release ABS-CBN broadcast journalist Mae Ann Macapagal and her cameraman Val Cuenca five days after they were abducted in the jungles of Sulu in 2000.

Abu Sayyaf member Omar Opit Lasal, alias Merang Abante, made the claim to police after he and four of colleagues, who allegedly took part in the Dos Palmas and Sipadan hostage takings, were arrested in a series of police operations this month.

Police Director General Hermogenes Ebdane Jr. and Local Government Secretary Joey Lina announced the arrest of the five alleged ASG members in Camp Crame yesterday afternoon.

Quoting Lasal, Chief Supt. Jesus Verzosa, director of the Intelligence Group, said Macapagal and Cuenca were freed after the "alleged payment" of P5 million in ransom.

"According to Lasal, he learned about the exchange of money in a conversation he overheard between his Abu Sayyaf cohorts Abu Andal, alias Pating, and Amin," Verzosa said at a press conference.

When asked who had paid the ransom, Verzosa said: "We still have to find out."

Speculation had swirled at the time that ABS-CBN executives had delivered a hefty sum to the bandits in exchange for the release of their crew members. The TV network had brushed off the insinuations.

Macapagal and Cuenca were taken hostage while on their way to interview the Abu Sayyaf bandits in Patikul, Sulu on July 24, 2000.

Lasal is also suspected of being part of the group that abducted American Jeffrey Schilling in Zamboanga City in August 2000, and of taking part in the siege of the Jose Ma. Torres Memorial Hospital in Lamitan, Basilan in 2001. He carried a P1-million reward for his capture.

Schilling was rescued in Patikul, Sulu in April 2001.

Ebdane identified the other captured bandits as Said Alah Usman, alias Kaiser Said; Nasser Abubakar Omar, alias Nasser Usman; Mahamud Hajan Amdani, alias Majindi Isnani, and Said Tayong Alrasid, alias Arik Arasid.

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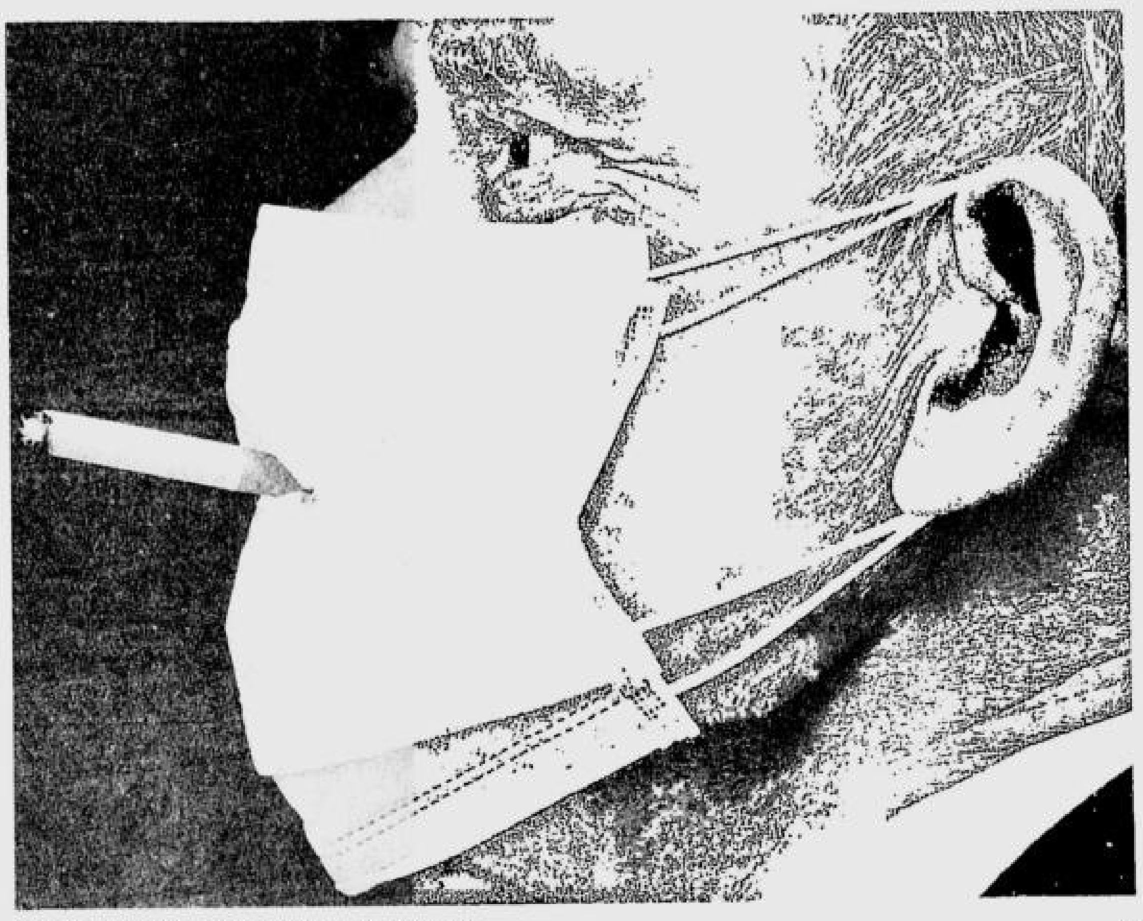

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The water levels in the Ambuklao and Binga hydroelectric dams in Benguet were already near critical levels.

As of 7 a.m. yesterday, the water level in Ambuklao was 747.75 meters, which is less than five meters below the maximum of 752 meters. The water level in Binga was 570.21 meters, also less than five meters below the maximum level of 575 meters.

However, the water level in the San Roque dam was 257.02 meters, way below its maximum level of 290 meters. *Reports from Martin Marfil, Gerald Lacuarta, Christine Gaylican, Juan Escandor Jr. and Ronnie Lorejo, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau, Frank Cimatu, Jovelyn Reyes and Yolanda Fuertes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau, and Carmela Reyes, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Abu says ABS-CBN paid ransom for reporters

By TJ Burgonio

THE ABU Sayyaf received at least P5 million in ransom to release ABS-CBN broadcast journalist Mae Ann Macapagal and her cameraman Val Cuenca five days after they were abducted in the jungles of Sulu in 2000.

Abu Sayyaf member Omar Opit Lasal, alias Merang Abante, made the claim to police after he and four of colleagues, who allegedly took part in the Dos Palmas and Sipadan hostage takings, were arrested in a series of police operations this month.

Police Director General Hermogenes Ebdane Jr. and Local Government Secretary Joey Lina announced the arrest of the five alleged ASG members in Camp Crame yesterday afternoon.

Quoting Lasal, Chief Supt. Jesus Verzosa, director of the Intelligence Group, said Macapagal and Cuenca were freed after the "alleged payment" of P5 million in ransom.

"According to Lasal, he learned about the exchange of money in a conversation he overheard between his Abu Sayyaf cohorts Abu Andal, alias Pating, and Amin," Verzosa said at a press conference.

When asked who had paid the ransom, Verzosa said: "We still have to find out."

Speculation had swirled at the time that ABS-CBN executives had delivered a hefty sum to the bandits in exchange for the release of their crew members. The TV network had brushed off the insinuations.

Macapagal and Cuenca were taken hostage while on their way to interview the Abu Sayyaf bandits in Patikul, Sulu on July 24, 2000.

Lasal is also suspected of being part of the group that abducted American Jeffrey Schilling in Zamboanga City in August 2000, and of taking part in the siege of the Jose Ma. Torres Memorial Hospital in Lamitan, Basilan in 2001. He carried a P1-million reward for his capture.

Schilling was rescued in Patikul, Sulu in April 2001.

Ebdane identified the other captured bandits as Said Alah Usman, alias Kaiser Said; Nasser Abubakar Omar, alias Nasser Usman; Mahamud Hajan Amdani, alias Majindi Isnani, and Said Tayong Alrasid, alias Arik Arasid.

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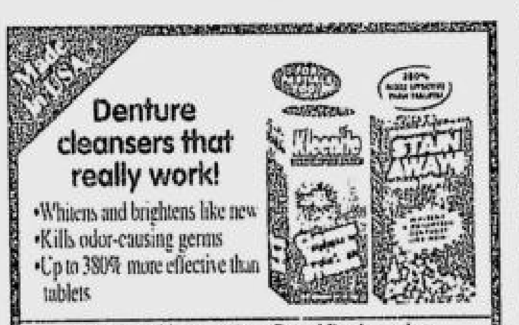

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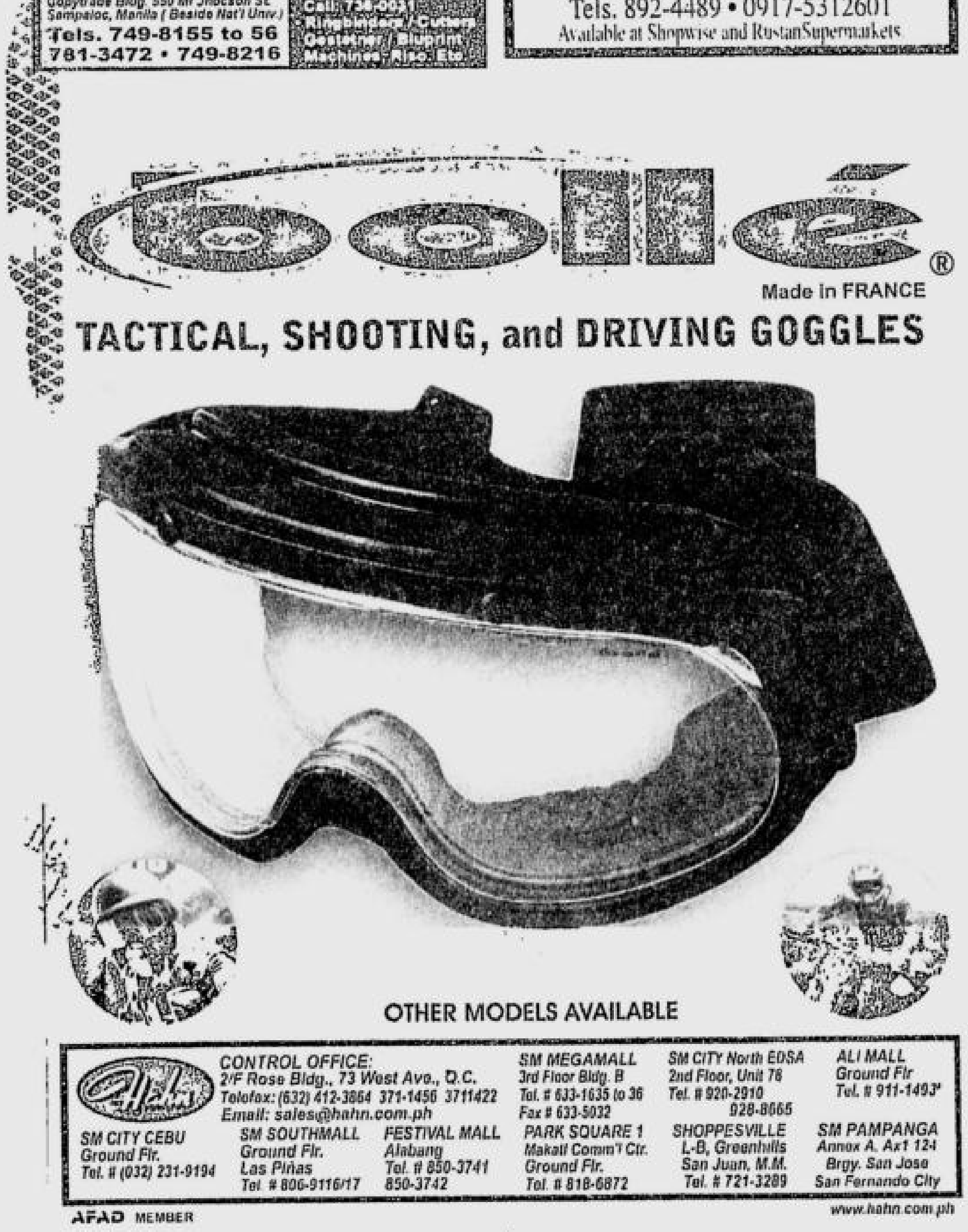

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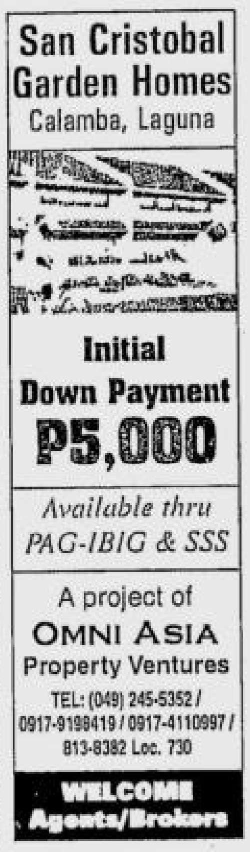

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What Is Pneumonia?

Pneumonia is a disease that occurs when the lungs get inflamed, usually due to infection. It's a more common problem than most people think. Usually it's a mild disease, but some forms are very dangerous and require a consultation with a doctor. An example is the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome or SARS, whose cause and cure have yet to be discovered. About 30 different kinds of germs infect the lungs and cause pneumonia. Infected lungs leak fluids and shed dead cells. This material clogs up air sacs and makes it hard for the lungs to do their job of getting oxygen into the blood. Without enough oxygen, none of the cells in your body work as they should.

Pneumonia can affect just one section of the lung or many sections of the lung. When both lungs are affected, it's called double pneumonia. Pneumonia generally lasts about two weeks. But it may take a month or more for the infected lung or lungs to clear up. Thus, when recovering from pneumonia, even healthy people may feel tired or weak.

Causes

Viruses cause about half of all cases of pneumonia. Bacteria are the most common cause of pneumonia in adults over the age of 30. Fungi can also cause pneumonia. Many of these germs are all around us. They usually can't get past a healthy person's natural defenses. That's why pneumonia is most common in elderly people, in cigarette smokers, in alcoholics, and in people suffering from other diseases such as the flu.

Symptoms

- Viral pneumonia usually comes with a combination of low fever and chills, muscle aches, fatigue, enlarged lymph nodes in the neck, chest pain, sore throat, and coughing. The cough generally brings up only a small amount of mucus.
- Bacterial pneumonia usually comes with a combination of high fever, cough with thick greenish or rust-colored mucus, shortness of breath, rapid breathing, sharp chest pain that is worse with deep breaths, abdominal pain, and severe fatigue. There can be profuse sweating and mental confusion.
- In children, labored and rapid breathing (more than 45 breaths a minute); sudden onset of fever; cough; wheezing; and bluish skin, lips, or fingertips are general signs of pneumonia.
- Mycoplasma pneumonia is often very benign and resolves without any treatment. Symptoms can consist of violent attacks of coughing that bring up only a small amount of mucus. There are chills and fever; some people get nausea or vomiting. Some patients become very weak for up to a month.

Fever as a symptom and why it should be managed at the onset

> *"Fever as a symptom of pneumonia should always be managed at the onset"*

Fever is a common symptom among the kinds of pneumonia. That's because fever is, by itself, the body's warning signal that there is an infection. It is very important that fever not be ignored so that a disease, whether pneumonia or not, can be detected and further complications be avoided. In the case of pneumonia, the best thing to do is to manage your fever at the first sign.

Managing Fever at the Onset

Whether it's mild or high, you should take Paracetamol like Biogesic to help alleviate your suffering from fever. Drink plenty of fluids and avoid physical and mental stress. It is also advisable to dress in light clothing so that you feel comfortable and your temperature can stabilize. After managing your fever, this does not mean that the rest of the symptoms should be taken lightly.

When to consult a doctor

- Your symptoms indicate you have any form of pneumonia. In many instances, you need immediate treatment to recover and avoid complications.
- Your sharp chest pain does not get better with prescribed treatment; you have increased shortness of breath; or your fingernails, toenails, or skin becomes dark or develop a bluish tinge after diagnosis. Your lungs are not getting enough oxygen and you need medical assistance.
- You cough up blood; you may need additional treatment for a worsening infection.

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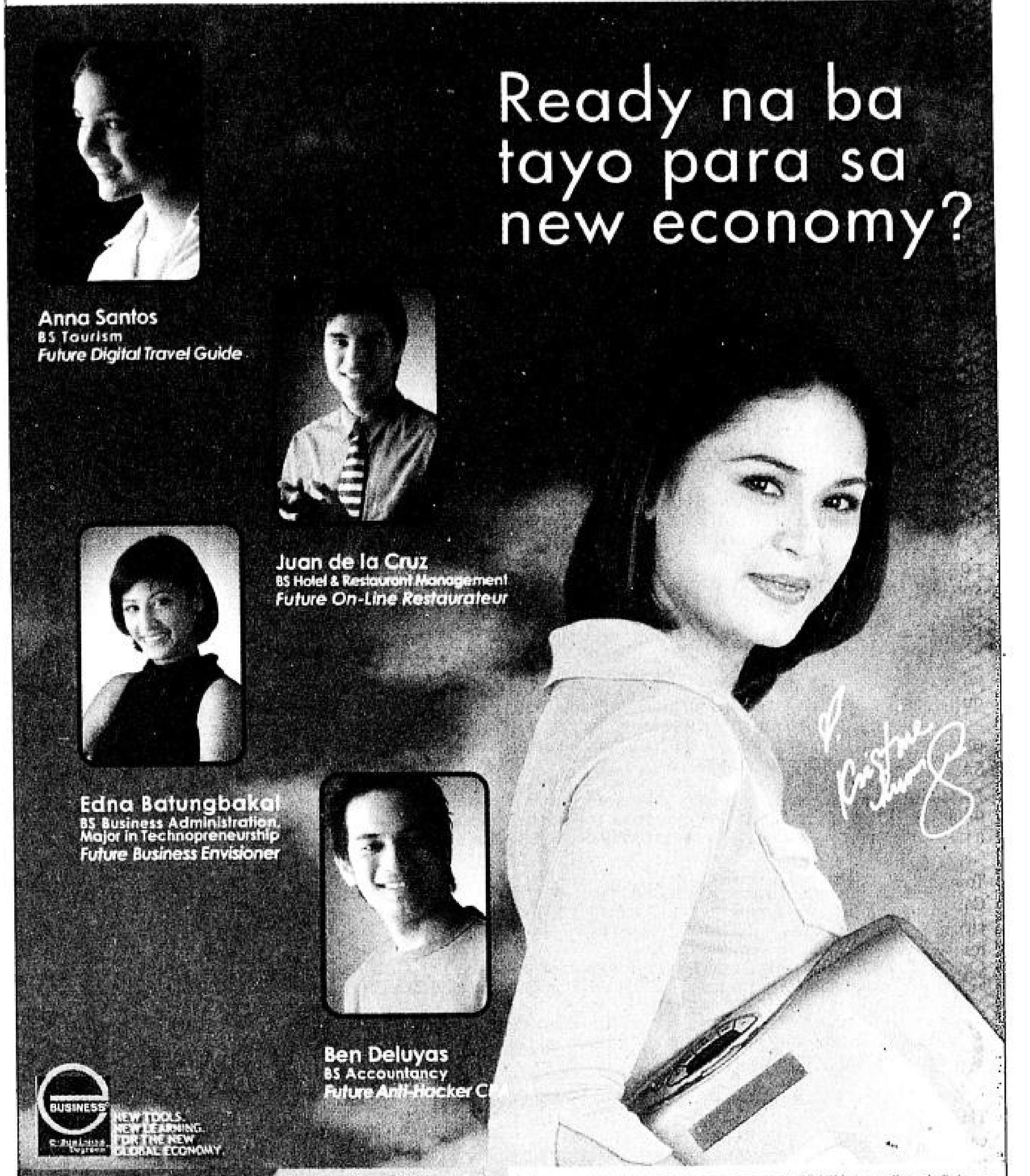
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Republic of the Philippines
COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS
Manila

IN THE MATTER OF AMENDING THE PERIOD OF REGISTRATION FOR OVERSEAS ABSENTEE VOTERS FROM JULY 1, 2003 TO SEPTEMBER 30, 2003 TO AUGUST 1, 2003 TO SEPTEMBER 30, 2003, AND THE DEADLINE FOR PUBLICATION OF NOTICE OF REGISTRATION

PRESENT:

ABALOS, Benjamin S.,	Chairman
TANCANGCO, Luzviminda G.,	Commissioner
JAVIER, Rufino S.B.,	Commissioner
LANTION, Ralph C.,	Commissioner
SADAIN, Mehol K.,	Commissioner
BORRA, Resurreccion Z.,	Commissioner
TUASON, Jr., Florentino A.,	Commissioner

Promulgated: 26 May 2003

RESOLUTION NO. 6183

WHEREAS, the Commission on Elections promulgated on May 14, 2003 Resolution No. 6117, otherwise known as "The Rules and Regulations Implementing the Overseas Absentee Voting Act of 2003";

WHEREAS, Resolution No. 6117 provides that applications for registration or certification as overseas absentee voter and applications to vote in absentia shall be filed beginning July 1, 2003 up to September 30, 2003;

WHEREAS, as a general policy of the Commission, the system to be used in the elections in the Philippines shall be the same system to be adopted abroad;

WHEREAS, the Commission will use the biometric system in the registration process to digitally capture the picture, signature and fingerprint of registered voters in the Philippines and abroad;

WHEREAS, it is necessary that the machines required for the purpose be made available overseas not later than two weeks before the start of the registration period for the conduct of training, testing, and if possible, simulation activities to approximate the actual requirements on the registration days;

WHEREAS, there are numerous preparatory activities to be undertaken by the Commission to ensure that all the requirements of the registration process shall be in place before the start of registration, and that the certified list of overseas absentee voters is clean, accurate and complete;

WHEREAS, Article 6 of Resolution No. 6117 provides that the Notice of Registration and Election shall be published not later than June 15, 2003 for purposes of the May 10, 2004 elections;

NOW, THEREFORE, The Commission on Elections, pursuant to the authority vested in it under the Constitution and other laws, **RESOLVED,** as it hereby **RESOLVES,** to reset:

1. The period for the filing of applications for registration or certification as overseas absentee voters and applications to vote in absentia to August 1, 2003 up to September 30, 2003; and
2. The deadline for the publication of the Notice of Registration and Election to July 1, 2003.

This Resolution shall take effect immediately after publication in two (2) newspapers of general circulation in the Philippines.

The Education and Information Department of the Commission shall cause the publication and widest dissemination of these Rules and furnish copies hereof to the Department of Foreign Affairs, Department of Labor and Employment, Department of Transportation and Communication, Philippine Postal Corporation, Philippine Overseas Employment Administration, Overseas Workers Welfare Administration, Commission on Filipino Overseas, and Maritime Industry Authority.

BENJAMIN S. ABALOS, SR.
Chairman

LUZVIMINDA G. TANCANGCO
Commissioner

RUFINO S.B. JAVIER
Commissioner

RALPH C. LANTION
Commissioner

MEHOL K. SADAIN
Commissioner

RESURRECCION Z. BORRA
Commissioner

FLORENTINO A. TUASON, JR.
Commissioner

Chinese trader abducted in Laguna

CALAMBA CITY—Six unidentified armed men kidnapped a 40-year-old Chinese businessman and his driver as they were nearing his house in Sta. Cruz, Laguna on Tuesday night.

A source close to the victims said Lusito Yu, owner of El Champion Snack Co., and his driver Jose Andres were in an owner-type jeep when a Mitsubishi L300 van blocked their way on P. Guevara St., Barangay Pagsawitan.

Six gun-wielding men alighted from the van and ordered the victims from their vehicle, the source said.

The Chinese businessman tried to hold on to a metal handle on his vehicle but the suspects shot him in the shoulder.

The suspects then also forced Andres into the van and took off.

Four hours later, the suspects dropped Andres off in Sta. Rosa town. The driver went to the town police who turned him over to Sta. Cruz police.

In a cell phone interview, Calabarzon police chief Senior Supt. Jaime Caringal refused to give details of the incident but said the Presidential Anti-Crime and Emergency Response (Pacer) was on the case.

A source in the police provincial command said the family of the victim has refused to cooperate with authorities.

The family has not received a ransom demand from the abductors, the source added. *Marlon Ramos, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

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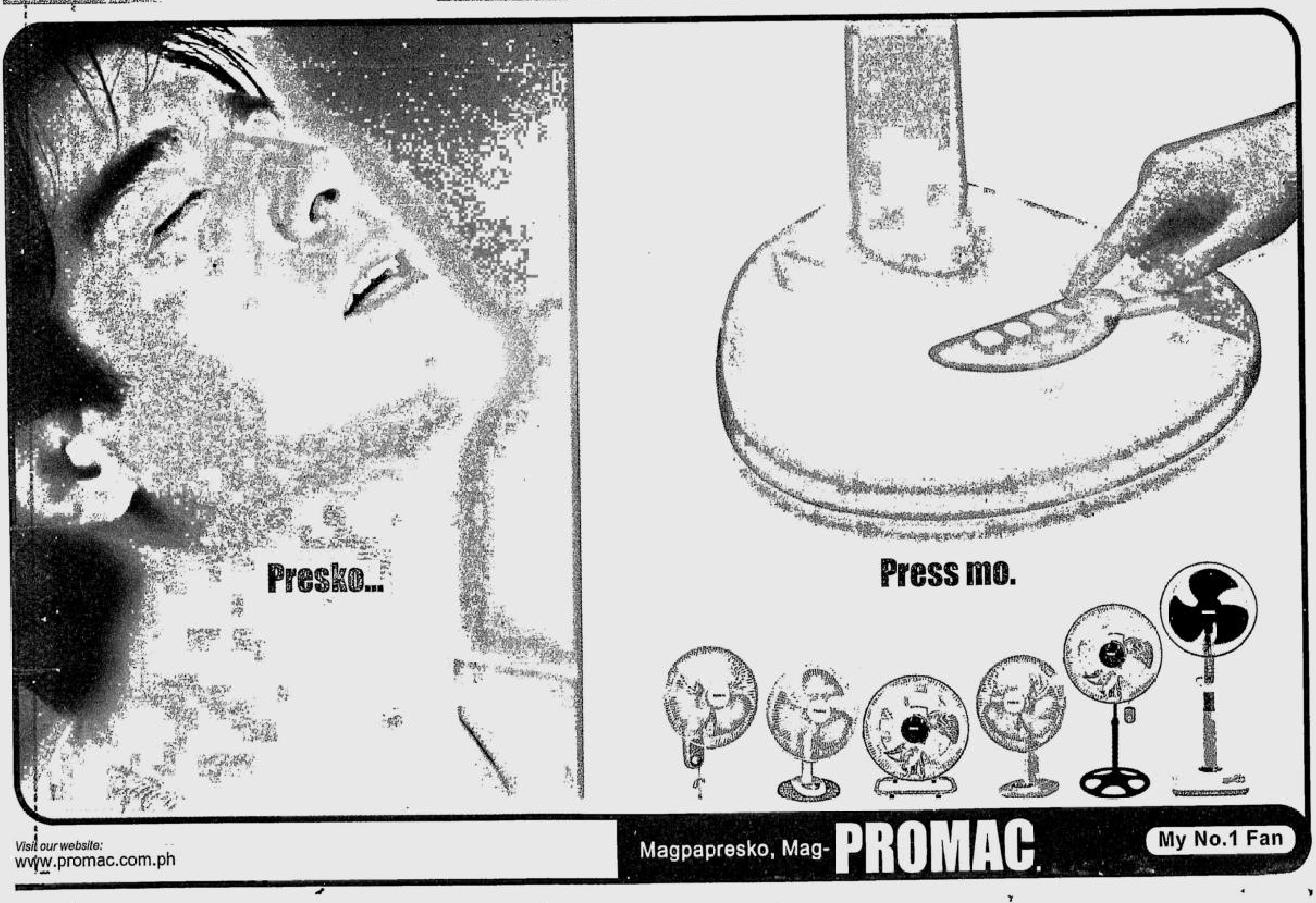

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DOJ exec questions Gracia on book's allegations

By Philip C. Tubeza

THE MEETING between Gracia Burnham and Justice Undersecretary Merceditas Gutierrez pushed through on Thursday in Kansas and the missionary was asked if, among other things, she had really heard Abu Sabaya talking to President Macapagal-Arroyo over a satellite phone.

Burnham had said she would be "more than willing" to help in the investigation of the military's alleged collusion with the Abu Sayyaf and was willing to return to the Philippines to do so.

Prosecution Attorney II Juan Pedro Navera said Gutierrez met with Burnham in a restaurant in Rosehill, Kansas "for one to two hours" on Thursday afternoon, Manila time.

Navera is part of the panel investigating allegations of collusion between the military and the Abu Sayyaf.

Navera said there were no cameras or tape recorders to record the event but there were Federal Bureau of Investigation agents and US Justice Department officials present.

Gutierrez asked Burnham to detail the allegations against the military contained in her book, "In the Presence of My Enemies."

"The meeting was cordial. It was a mutual exchange of information. I can tell you Mrs. Burnham was frank enough to answer our questions," Navera said.

He said most of the questions Gutierrez asked are related to the allegations the military had given fuel and ammunition to the Abu Sayyaf, and the involvement of Philippine Army officers in the negotiations for the release of the Burnhams and Filipino hostages.

Another DOJ official, who wished not to be identified, gave the INQUIRER a copy of the questions Gutierrez asked Burnham.

Many of them had to do with the language or dialect the Abu Sayyaf used in talking with the Dos Palmas hostages, Lamitan nurses and among themselves.

"In your book, you narrated that Abu Sabaya talked to you and Mr. Burnham in English. What was the language or dialect that he used to order and instruct other Abu Sayyaf members in your presence?" went one question.

Then the questions about Mrs. Arroyo:

"You stated in your book that at one point, you heard Abu Sabaya talk to President Macapagal-Arroyo using a satellite phone. How close were you to Abu Sabaya during the exchange?"

"Do you believe it was President Arroyo who was at the other end of the line?" went a question.

Burnham was also asked: "Did Abu Sabaya tell you the identity of the general who wanted a twenty to fifty percent cut of the ransom?"

Navera said the DOJ would decide next week "whether there is truth to the allegations or if there is enough evidence" to warrant a formal preliminary investigation.

Aide to Abu Sayyaf leader slain; another is captured

A SUSPECTED member of the Muslim extremist Abu Sayyaf group was fatally shot after he grabbed a soldier's rifle and tried to escape following his capture, officials said Friday.

Mauran Ampol, who reportedly has a P150,000 price on his head, was captured Wednesday on the outskirts of Isabela City in Basilan, said Col. Bonifacio Ramos, Basilan's military chief.

As he was being put into a military truck Thursday, Ampol grabbed the rifle of one of his escorts and tried to escape but another soldier shot him dead, Ramos said.

Ramos described Ampol, also known as Bashirol Ampul, as a trusted lieutenant of Hamsiraji Sali, one of the top five Abu Sayyaf leaders wanted for the 2001 kidnapping of 21 Filipino and foreign hostages from the Dos Palmas Resort in Palawan.

Ampol was also allegedly involved in the earlier abduction of American Jeffrey Schilling and a string of other kidnappings and murder cases, Ramos said.

He had been taken in by soldiers following a clash Wednesday in which he suffered a leg wound.

In Zamboanga City, troops manning a checkpoint captured another suspected Abu Sayyaf member, Muras Kangal, army spokesperson Lt. Col. Joselito Kakilala said.

Kangal was allegedly involved in several incidents of sea hijacking, piracy, kidnapping and drug trafficking, Kakilala said.

Kangal was a member of the Mutallah Force under Basire Jailani operating in the Zamboanga peninsula and was allegedly involved in the mass abduction of teachers and students in Basilan in 2000.

His unit, according to the military, was taken over by the late Abu Sayyaf leader Abdujarak Janjalani and incorporated into the Abu Sayyaf.

The suspect was turned over to the local police for disposition.

The Abu Sayyaf has been linked to al-Qaida and is on the US list of foreign terrorist organizations. *Martin P. Marfil; Julie S. Alipala, PDI Mindanao Bureau; AP, AFP*

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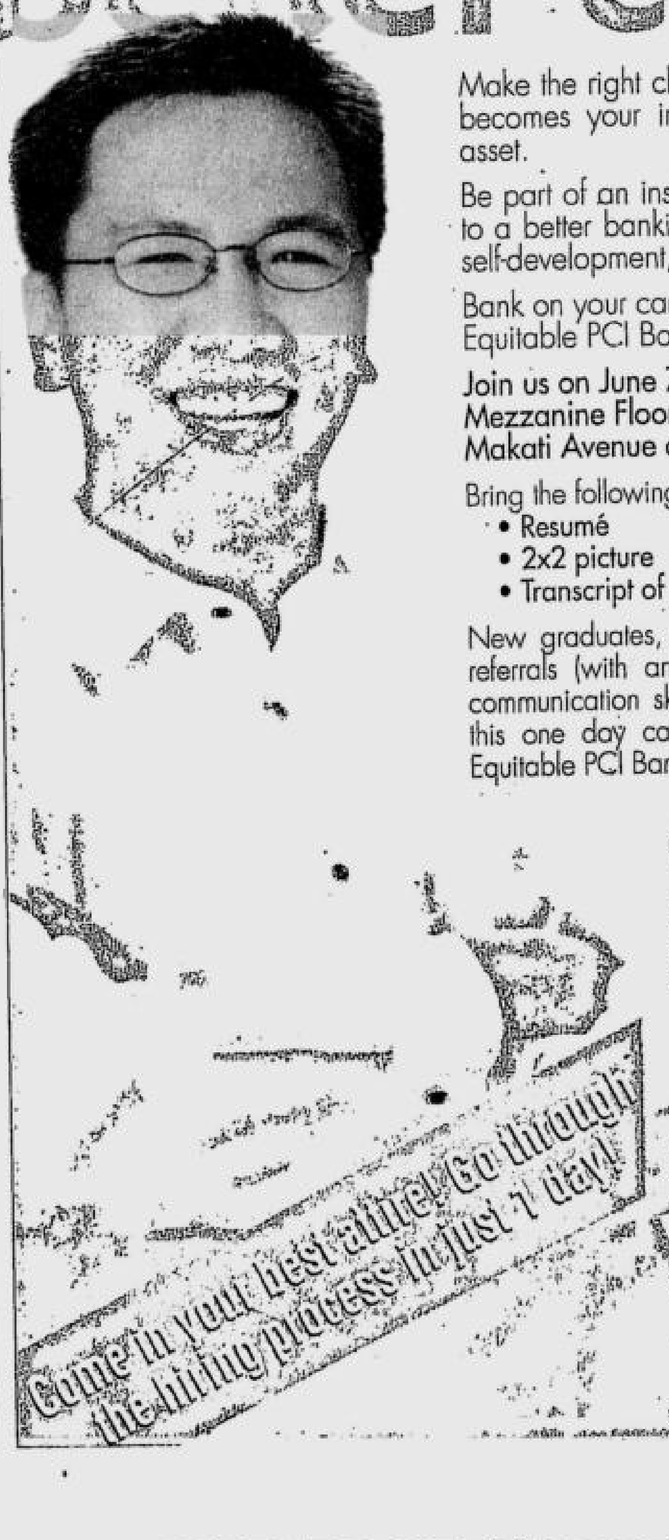
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THE JOBZ Employment Expo was organized recently by Inq7 Interactive Inc.'s Job Market in cooperation with sponsors that included NIIT Education & Training Center, at the Glorietta Activity Center in Makati. The expo was participated in by companies like the Aboitiz Transport Group, Chowking, DHL Worldwide Express, E-telecare, McDonald's, Philam Group, U-Bix and others. Shown during the contract signing for NIIT's participation are, from left, Brad Geiser, managing director of Geiser Maclang Communications Inc., Paolo R. Prieto, president and CEO of Inq7 Interactive, and Bartolome Silayan Jr., managing director of NIIT-Phils.

Jobs info just a finger-flick away

By Michelle V. Remo

JOB HUNTING has just been made a lot easier—with the flick of a finger through texting.

Media industry giants GMA 7, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Inq7.net and New Media Inc. have teamed up to establish a high-tech service that would help seekers find jobs through the use of SMS (short messaging service).

Called the Kapuso Job Market, the service gives job hunters updates on available positions suited to their qualifications.

"The collaboration between the media companies is meant as an additional service to the public. Now job hunters do not need to wait for the Sunday Job Market issue of the INQUIRER or log on to Inq7.net to look for a job," said Judd Galleres, president and chief operating officer of New Media Inc. at Thursday's project launch.

Job Market of PDI and Inq7.net will provide the content, such as company profiles, for the undertaking since it is in contact with client companies, said Donald Lim, INQUIRER's classifieds and marketing head.

For their part, GMA will promote the service through its programs and build up Kapuso brand equity, while New Media will provide technology support, said Geraldine Go, assistant vice president for business development of New Media.

To avail oneself of the service, one only has to key in the word "jobs" and send to 4627 for Smart and Talk 'n Text subscribers, and 2344 for Globe. A reply giving complete instructions on how to register with the Kapuso Job Market service will immediately be received.

The cost of each text message is P2.50.

"We expect it (Kapuso Job Market) to be well received by the public, especially now that a lot of people are looking for jobs," said Paolo Prieto, president of Inq7.net.

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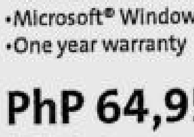

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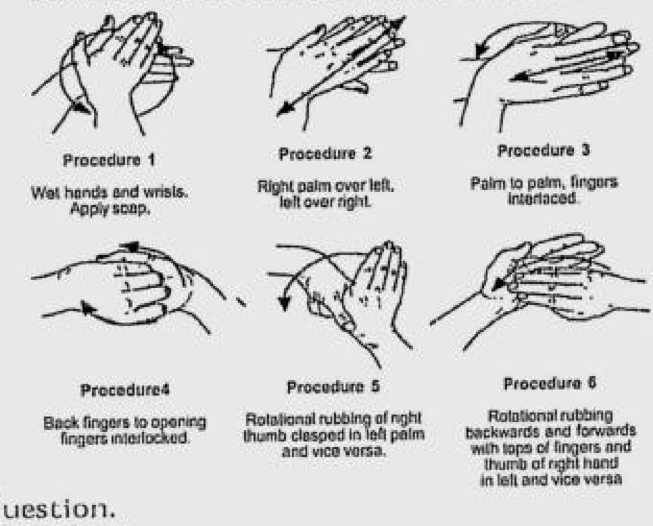
Procedure 1
Wet hands and wrists. Apply soap.
Procedure 2
Right palm over left, left over right.
Procedure 3
Palm to palm, fingers interlaced.
Procedure4
Back fingers to opening fingers interlocked.
Procedure 5
Rotational rubbing of right thumb clasped in left palm and vice versa.
Procedure 6
Rotational rubbing backwards and forwards with tops of fingers and thumb of right hand in left and vice versa

Question.

I'm a one-pack-a-day smoker and I'm wondering why cigarette smoking is being linked to SARS? Is this another gimmick of anti-smoking advocates?

Reported SARS cases in the Country
(March 17 - May 30, 2003)

SARS suspects:	
total cumulative admission	86
total discharged	83
presently admitted (May 30, 2003)	2
SARS cases	12
SARS deaths	2
SARS Recovered/Cured	10

Answer.

Are you still not convinced that smoking is dangerous to your health? Smoking lowers your body's resistance to fight off infections. Smokers can easily get infected not only with the SARS virus, but also with other lung infections. Remember, SARS is a respiratory disease and your lungs are at stake

Today is World No Tobacco Day - STOP SMOKING and Maintain a Healthy Lifestyle!

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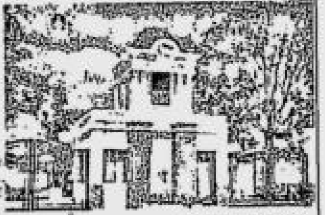

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Meralco granted rate hike of 8.76¢; small users spared

By Ronnel W. Domingo

SMALL customers of the Manila Electric Co. can expect to see a decrease in their next monthly bill while big customers should see an increase, after the Energy Regulatory Commission (ERC) ruled yesterday on the utility's petition for higher rates.

In a 45-page order, the ERC said Meralco customers who use only up to 300 kilowatt-hours a month of electricity would enjoy up to a 70 percent cut in distribution rates, which is currently at 76 centavos per kWh plus the currency exchange rate adjustment.

On the other hand, customers who consume 301 kWh and more a month will suffer an increase of 8.76 centavos per kWh.

The ERC said the order was meant to effect a socialized pricing scheme for the benefit of low-end power consumers.

The new distribution rates are to take effect in the June billing cycle.

When reached for comment, Meralco president Jesus Francisco said he had not read the order which came out late yesterday night.

In an earlier interview, Francisco had said the utility's ability to pay the P30 billion refund to customers would depend on whether it could secure a bigger rate increase from the ERC.

The quasi-judicial body had ruled in March that Meralco could unbundle its rates, resulting in an average rate hike of 5.4 centavos per kWh.

The utility had originally asked for an overall increase of P1.12 per kWh.

Meralco's residential customers are demanding an immediate lump sum cash refund, which would cost the utility P11 billion.

But Meralco had secured an order from the ERC mandating an initial refund to customers who consumed only up to 100 kWh, which would cost it P2.2 billion.

Francisco had said the firm's cash flow would not allow payments to other customers, as this was constricted by P11 billion in loan interest and principal payments due this year.

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No US trip for Jinggoy, court rules

"THERE'S always a first time."

With that, the Sandiganbayan denied former San Juan Mayor Jinggoy Estrada's May 5 pleading that he allowed to take his family on a month-long vacation to the United States. The younger Estrada has been out on bail since March.

In a three-page ruling yesterday, the court described as "lame" Jinggoy's assurance that he would be back and the court need not worry.

"There is always a first time. The mind of a person is not a machine whose direction can be controlled. Just like the moon, when clouds are thick and heavy and dark, its refulgent light cannot be seen by the naked eye," the court said in its resolution.

Jinggoy had asked the court for permission to travel to expose his three young children to a foreign culture for their "educational enrichment and enlightenment." One of their destinations was reportedly Disneyland in California.

Jinggoy is a co-accused with his father, deposed President Joseph Estrada, in a P4-billion plunder case where they stand accused of amassing illegal wealth from illegal gambling proceeds.

At the Estradas' trial yesterday, the ex-president's new lawyer Alan Paguia entered into the record excerpts from the 2002 book, "Reforming the Judiciary" by Supreme Court Justice Artemio Panganiban.

Paguia used the book to bolster Estrada's latest bid to have his cases dismissed on the ground that he was "still" the president. *Volt Contreras*

On No Tobacco Day, solon bats for leaf farmers

CANDON CITY—Anti-smoking proponents will leverage today's celebration of World No Tobacco Day to push for a smoking ban in all schools, restaurants and public places within two years.

But Ilocos Sur Rep. Eric Singson yesterday said he wanted to delay the ban's implementation by seven years. Ilocos Sur is part of the country's tobacco-growing region.

Two years is too short a time for about 55,000 tobacco farmers, most of them based in the Ilocos region, to switch to other crops, Singson said.

A pending bill in Congress—HB 5950, sponsored by Rep. Magtanggol Gunigundo Jr.—calls for a stop to the selling of cigarettes and other tobacco products to children 18 years and below. It also seeks a ban on smoking in schools, government offices, hospitals, public transport like buses and jeepneys, and parks.

Under the measure, smoking will be regulated in such venues as restaurants and bars, Singson said.

Advertising by tobacco companies will be limited, he added. Television and radio stations won't be allowed to broadcast cigarette ads between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. Newspapers, weeklies and magazines would also have to prove that 75 percent of their readers are 18 years and above before they can carry tobacco-related ads.

Singson claimed that tobacco companies in the Philippines spend P700 million a year on advertising.

Officials of the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control in Southeast Asia, during their October meeting last year had wanted a total ban on tobacco advertising. *Frank Cimatu, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

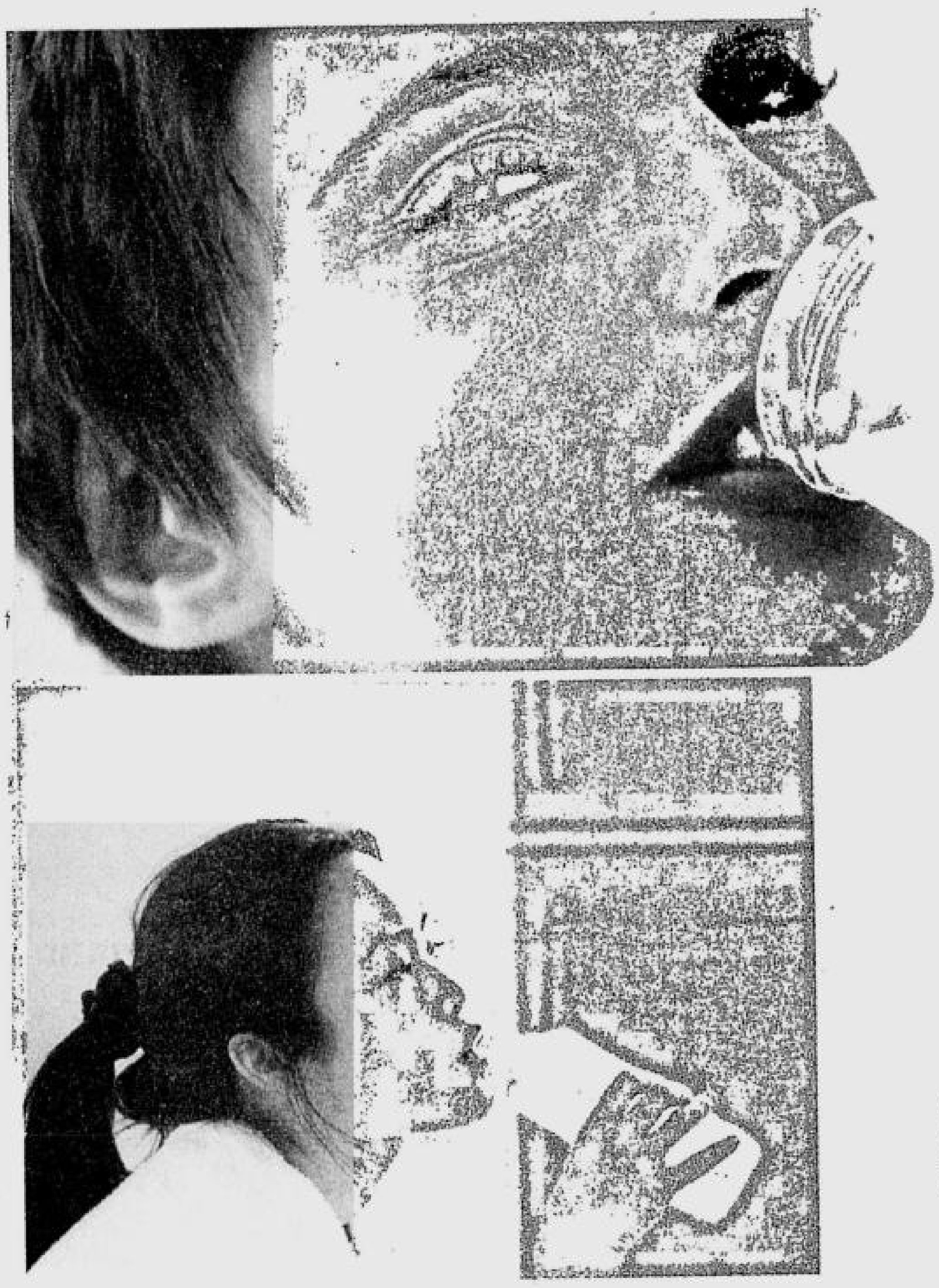
M. Melencio; 58

MIGUEL M. Melencio passed away on May 29 at the age of 58.

He is survived by his wife Amelia, children Fermin, Tess, Bobby, Jorge and Michelle.

His body lies at his residence at Tibagan, Bustos, Bulacan.

Interment will be on June 4 at 2 p.m. at Donacion Cemetery, Angat, Bulacan.



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Icons of the press

EDITORIAL

THE DEATHS of two outstanding journalists belonging to different generations reflect the signposts of change that have taken place in Philippine journalism in the last 60 years. It is understandable that many in the business—and outside of it—should mourn the passing away of Armando J. Malay, 89, and Raul Locsin, 71. What they should mourn is the passage of an old order that, with its share of utopian ideals and bleak frustrations, these journalists personified throughout their eventful lives.

Malay made his name as a journalist in the politically rambunctious days of the Commonwealth and the postwar, writing reportage and columns that mirrored the excitement and optimism of the times, though none of its venom and acerbity. His prose was measured and low-key, not bombastic or caustic like some of his colleagues'. If there was bite in his pen, it was the rapier-like insight that only came after a minute unveiling of the facts. He was an inductive journalist not given to grandiloquent reductionism.

His avuncular style differentiated him from the rest of the brat pack. It also reflected his methodical, clinical and even scientific nature, which stood him well when he started to teach part-time in journalism schools, and later when he shifted to a full-time academic career at the University of the Philippines.

In a way, he was destined for the academe, at least of the UP sort. Since he maintained a watchdog mien all throughout his journalistic career, he could only bask at the independence of mind and spirit that the State University could offer its faculty. He thrived in such an environment and became a full-fledged activist, locking horns with Ferdinand Marcos and shielding the student barricades during the First Quarter Storm in the early 1970s. He did those as dean of student affairs, and even after he left the post, he carried the title like a second name.

In his political activism and journalistic struggles, Malay reflected the turbulence of political transitions and the political determinism of much of Philippine affairs at that time. Everything was seen through the political prism, as it were, and the focus and conduct of journalism were one of searing politics, for better or for worse.

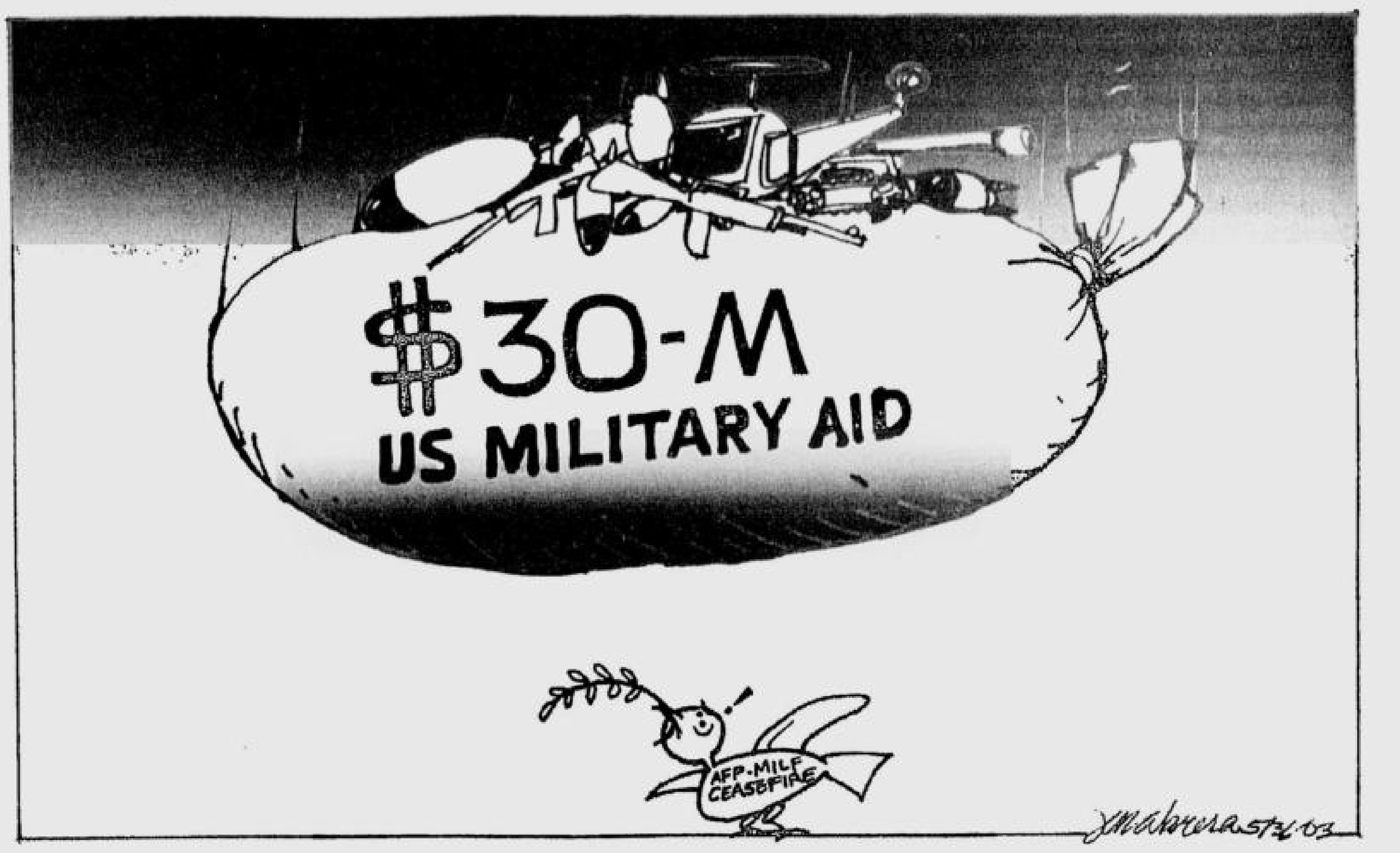
Against this spirit, Raul Locsin presented a stark contrast. Although both had worked in political broadsheets—Malay with the Manila Times and Locsin with the Manila Chronicle—the younger Locsin was bent on a career in business journalism. Considering the business and economic roots of the Chronicle (owned by the enterprising Lopez industrial clan), Locsin was given free rein to develop his talent and vision.

It also seemed the Chronicle also developed Locsin's entrepreneurial flair. For when he left it, he borrowed money from the bank and sought business partners to put up Business Monitor, and later, Business Day, and much, much later, today's BusinessWorld. Without doubt, the Day and the World are two of the most important papers in Philippine journalism history in the last 50 years.

The sea change in Philippine journalism was that while Malay and his ilk sought to explain the political effects of political causes, Locsin evolved a type of journalism that sought to explain the political effects of economic causes and the economic effects of political developments. Locsin's innovation was easily one of the most important transitions in explanatory journalism not only in the Philippines but also in Asia.

However the variance in modes and approaches, however the fact that they were separated by a generation, Malay and Locsin were kindred spirits in that they evinced an autonomy and tenacity of spirit, a dedication to the truth, and an unswerving devotion to the tenets of the best journalism. No wonder, the two found themselves allied warriors against the Marcos dictatorship—Malay championing human rights in a political thrust at the political repression of the strongman, and Locsin championing transparency and the free market in an economic thrust at the rapacious Pacman instincts and monopolistic tendencies of the Marcos kleptocracy.

Their achievements should bring Malay and Locsin together in the old school of journalism, with its tradition of truth-seeking and defiant engagement. It is hoped that their legacy will continue to shine in a media regime given to short cuts, corruption and mediocrity.



The House Concurrent Resolution No. 16

SEPARATE OPINION

Isagani A. Cruz

SPEAKER Jose de Venecia, who is the loudest drumbeater for the parliamentary system, says that House Concurrent Resolution No. 16, converting Congress into a constituent assembly to revise the Constitution, was approved at midnight of March 20, 2003, by *viva voce* vote. This was done after a roll call showing the presence of 147 members, who were later joined by 57 others who appeared "before/after" the roll call, showing that a total of 204 representatives participated in that crucial voting in the dead of night on that date.

With only 219 members constituting the House of Representatives, that record attendance, and at midnight, would show that when the resolution was voted upon only 15 representatives were absent and were already presumably sleeping at home after a hard day's work. One cannot blame them, of course, for Congress rarely meets until the wee hours of the night except to deliberate on tremendously important measures like the impeachment of the President or the replacement of the Speaker.

But such was the force of De Venecia's leadership that an impressive majority of his colleagues responded to his call and forced themselves to be present that night, foregoing their usual nocturnal pleasures. They were resolved to join in the *viva voce* voting and shout "Aye!" to their leader's ardent proposal to junk the presidential system and replace it with a parliamentary government that he dreams of heading as prime minister.

Several members expressly registered their "No" votes and others reserved their right to explain their votes not later than March 29, 2003. Rep. Ramon Escudero observed that, "the voting conducted was merely an 'aye' and 'nay' vote," and the actual vote of each member, upon submission of their written manifestations or explanation, would be reflected in the records.

But as far as De Venecia is concerned, House Resolution No. 16 has already been approved in his chamber, and all he has to do is persuade the Senate to follow his lead. The trouble is that the senators are not as docile as his rainbow coalition or as ready to support his known ambition, which will abolish their own chamber and leave them jobless. De Venecia may think his plan is a done deal in the House, but it is a dead duck in the Senate.

Without questioning the House journals short of expressing surprise over the extraordinary attendance of the representatives on that midnight session that resoundingly approved House Concurrent Resolution No. 16, I will here reiterate the stand I took when I was a member of the Supreme Court against the conclusiveness of the legislative journals upon the courts of justice, including the highest tribunal.

According to long-standing and still applicable jurisprudence, the judiciary is bound by the recitals in the legislative journals and cannot examine or verify them because this would violate the separation of powers. This doctrine has been invariably sustained by the Supreme Court, which has refused to accept evidence seeking to belie the recitals in the journals as authenticated by the leaders of the legislature.

In the old case of US v. Pons, 34 Phil. 729, the appellant claimed he had been convicted under an invalid law that was passed beyond the statutory period of a special session as fixed by the Jones Law. He offered to prove the well-known fact that the legislature stayed the hands of its clock to make it appear it was still meeting on the last day when it in fact continued to meet one more day before it actually but illegally adjourned. The Supreme Court rejected the offer, holding that it was concluded by the recital in the legislative journal that it adjourned on the last day of the special session.

"If the clock was, in fact, stopped as here suggested," it said, "the resultant evil might be slight as compared to that of altering the probative force and character of the legislative records and making the proof of legislative action depend upon uncertain and oral evidence, liable to loss by death or absence, and so imperfect on account of treachery of memory. Long, long centuries ago, these considerations of public policy led to the adoption of the rule giving verity and unimpeachability to legislative records."

And yet, the whole country knew, as reported in the daily newspapers, that the Legislature had met beyond the statutory limit and had stayed the hands of its clock to make it appear in its journals that it duly adjourned on the last day of the 30-day period. Only the Supreme Court pretended ignorance of that undeniably demonstrated fact, and it continues to this day to indulge that fantasy.

I mention this case without any insinuation against the regularity of that midnight session of the House of Representatives where, according to its journal, no less than 204 of its members met at midnight on March 20, 2003, and overwhelmingly adopted by *viva voce* vote House Concurrent Resolution No. 16. In fact, I will commend them for their extraordinary conscientiousness in denying themselves their usual bedtime rest to attend to an important constitutional activity at the call of their wannabe prime minister.

A class act

GET REAL

Solita Collas-Monsod

(The following is based on my eulogy to Raul Locsin during the Necrological Service for him on May 29 at the Ateneo Church of the Jesu.)

HOW do I admire Raul Locsin? Let me count the ways.

I was an admirer of Raul Locsin long before I ever met him.

Before martial law, Raul Locsin was just a name on a masthead to me. But I admired him because the stories in Business Day, Asia's first business newspaper, which he published and edited, were so much more accurate and sober than those of other major dailies—no spin, no sensationalism, no press-release-turned-news stories kind of reporting. So much so that when different versions of the same story came out in different newspapers, the correct one was invariably Raul's. His was a class act—a newspaper's newspaper.

During martial law, I admired him for keeping the integrity of Business Day intact, avoiding the sycophantic, groveling, subservient stance of the other newspapers. That took a lot of guts (also fantastic balancing). Business Day was the only credible newspaper, as far as I and many, many others were concerned. Until the mosquito press came on the scene, it was the only paper to read. Another class act.

I was shocked when he closed Business Day, shortly after the Edsa Revolution. But my admiration grew when I found out why he did so. He refused to accede to what he thought was excessive and unwarranted labor demands. He did not buckle under intimidation during martial law, and he was not about to buckle under intimidation after martial law. If that meant closing the paper, so be it.

Not very many people would have been willing to throw 20 years of hard work down the drain to uphold a principle. But that's Raul for you.

Any niggling suspicions that he was anti-labor were erased when BusinessWorld was set up by former employees of Business Day, who begged Raul to help them out—as publisher. Later on, he "sold" his shares in BusinessWorld to the employees' provident fund—"payable when able"—which meant the newspaper is effectively owned by its employees. It turns out, he used to be a trade union leader, but he also was, as F. Sionil Jose pointed out, a capitalist to the core. I suspect he was intent on making capitalists of his employees. Still another class act.

I finally met Raul in the flesh, more than 20 years after I became his admirer. And I became even more impressed. This was when BusinessWorld invited me to one of its dialogues-cum-seminars with government officials. I had expected handsome, knowing his cousin Teddy Boy, but I had not expected tall (also knowing Teddy Boy). His incisiveness was camouflaged by his soft-spoken, courtly demeanor.

It was immediately apparent why Raul had a reputation for being so attractive to the ladies. A Renaissance Man (as he has been so aptly described) is hard to resist—by anyone. The difference, of course, with politicians and the like who claim success with their ladies, is that, one, it was not his power or his money that attracted, but his brains and his charm; and two, he never allowed his personal life to impinge on his professional responsibilities—he kept the two totally separate. Which is something, again, I could admire.

I hasten to add that on this matter, I do not speak from personal experience—although my source is unimpeachable.

Through the years since then, my respect and admiration for Raul increased. I was misquoted once in BusinessWorld. I brought it to the attention of one of the other reporters, and the newspaper not only printed a correction, but the reporter involved extended a profuse apology. I never experienced that before or since with any other newspaper. Raul ran a tight ship—and did not tolerate inaccuracies.

On the other hand, I saw how he stood foursquare behind his reporters whose stories were accurate and factual but had displeased high officials or big businesspersons. His reporters idolized him for that.

When he welcomed me as a columnist, he laughingly reiterated that in his newspaper, advertising space was the only thing that was sold—not editorial space—so I would never experience what I had experienced elsewhere: seeing my columns killed because they were critical of big advertisers. I idolized him for that.

But what is truly remarkable, and what made Raul cast such a giant shadow, is that while he stood by his principles—guarding his independence, never giving in to pressures, never stooping to accept bribes—and while he insisted on applying the highest standards of journalism, his newspaper always showed healthy profits. Proving to all and sundry that principle and profits are not mutually exclusive.

Truly, Raul was a prince among men. If you will pardon my French, he had balls, he had brains, and he had heart. He demonstrated to us that what should be done can be done. With no need, no excuse, for compromise. That is the legacy he leaves.

His passing creates an enormous void which will be very difficult to fill. But it can be done, if those of us left behind will work together. And we can start by promising ourselves that if we cannot bring honor to our respective professions the way Raul did to his, we will at least not bring to it any shame.

Thank you, Raul, for showing us the way.

Tokyo should retire Takano

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

JAPANESE Ambassador Kojiro Takano admitted before the Foreign Correspondents' Association of the Philippines that he has not slept well even a single night in Manila since he arrived a year ago, because "almost every day is a daily threat. We are under constant danger." He cited threats of kidnappings and possible bomb attacks against the general population. It's evident that Takano is the hyper-nervous type and the Japanese Foreign Ministry should retire him from its diplomatic service. For with the prevailing global terrorism, a certain degree of risk has become inherent in this profession. Hyper-nervous diplomats have no business representing their country abroad.

* * *

Would the Japanese envoy be able to sleep in Casablanca, Riyadh or even in Bali where over 200 Australians were killed last year? Would he feel secure in the United States which has been on Alert Orange for weeks? How would Takano have reacted if his car were hit by a bomb, like what happened to our ambassador to Jakarta? Or if he were posted in Lima, Peru, when the Japanese Embassy was seized by terrorists during the Emperor's Day reception some years back, and so many guests were taken hostage? Can Takano sleep better in Jerusalem?

* * *

What makes Takano's undiplomatic remarks unfair is that so many other places abroad were actually hit by terrorist attacks in recent months while Manila was not. Moreover, his remarks came on the eve of President Macapagal-Arroyo's visit to Tokyo on June 5. The Japanese government must be very embarrassed over this faux pas.

But while Takano's remarks about the security risks are uncalled for, those pertaining to the worries of Japanese businessmen about inconsistent trade and business policies that lack transparency and are whimsical are quite valid. More than security, what has always bothered businessmen of any nationality are the inconsistent and capricious policies and the absence of a level playing field.

* * *

A day after the MILF announced a 10-day unilateral ceasefire in Mindanao, its forces struck an Army post and killed several civilians. This only serves to confirm the government's doubts about the sincerity of the MILF. On the other hand, the MILF has labeled as unreasonable the government's demand that the top leaders accused of having a hand in the bombings in Mindanao be surrendered. The prospect for peace is once again like a ping-pong ball.

But perhaps we ought to learn from the inspiring example of Israel and Palestine. An ideal peace won't come overnight in a neat package. The protagonists have to learn to give in and remain committed to peace despite setbacks. In a way our Mindanao conflict is not unlike that of the Middle East: the success of a peace process will depend on the resoluteness of the government and the MILF leaders to seek peace. Interestingly, in both cases the US is being called upon to play the role of midwife.

* * *

A month ago, Israel and Palestine were presented a "road map" for "a final and comprehensive settlement" of their decades-old territorial conflict. It calls for a three-year timetable that will end in 2005 with the recognition of an independent Palestinian state existing peacefully side by side with Israel, and in turn, the latter can live in peace with the Arab states. This "road map" was crafted jointly by the US, the United Nations, the European Union and Russia, now known as the "Quartet," following guidelines set by President Bush in his June 2002 speech.

Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon and new Palestinian Prime Minister Mahmoud Abbas held their historic first meeting two weeks ago, and within two days they will meet again in Jordan, this time with Bush as referee. With his victory in Iraq, Bush has been under tremendous pressure to tackle the Israeli conflict next, and push it to fruition.

* * *

But a series of deadly suicide bombings carried out by the Palestinians and the exchange of barbed accusations between the two protagonists threatened to derail that peace plan. In addition, both leaders have come under fire from their own homegrown critics: Sharon from the Israeli right in his Cabinet who call the road map "Israel's surrender to Palestinian terrorism" and Abbas for his inability to control the extremist Hamas and Islamic Jihad.

The good thing is that under tremendous pressure from Bush, both leaders have persisted with the roadmap. One reason may be that Abbas, who holds a doctorate degree from Moscow, is very close to Israeli leaders, unlike the fiery PLO chair Yasser Arafat. Abbas was also involved with the Oslo peace process over Israel a decade back, and in his inaugural speech he asserted that violence must be stopped. Then, too, Sharon has decided to invest full trust in President Bush, arguing that "Israel must not be looked upon as an obstacle to the search for peace."

* * *

The protagonists have scaled down their expectations and demands and recognize that concessions have to be made. In discussing security with Abbas, for instance, Sharon told him that if the Palestinians cannot gain control of all the areas under dispute yet, "then take responsibility for just a section of the front, and we will not be acting in that area." In other words, take it step by step. As Bush put it, "We're still on the road to peace. It's just going to be a bumpy road."

But historic progress is being made. Last Sunday, Sharon's rightist Cabinet gave conditional approval to the road map after a stormy six-hour session, by a vote of 12-7, with four abstentions. *(More next time)*

That thing called hope

COMMENTARY

Junefe Gilig Payot

Institute on Church and Social Issues

I DIDN'T know how to spend my week-long vacation leave. I had personal projects to do in the mornings, but I didn't know what to do in the afternoons. So I decided to go around Metro Manila in spite of SARS.

My first destination was Cubao. It is now totally different from Tony Perez's Cubao yet still the same. Cubao now has the busiest MRT station. And last April, the new LRT-2 started operating from Santolan in Marikina to Cubao. The places Perez mentioned in his popular short stories are now long gone while new ones have opened. But Cubao has remained the same, for the tensions and the struggles of its denizens are still there.

At the entrance of Rustan's Department Store, picketing workers made noise with kettles and pans and their own voices. They were demanding a raise in their wages and an end to contractualization. The same was true for SM-Cubao, just across the street. But the shouts of the workers were no match to the loud pop music coming from the speakers that the department stores purposely put outside their buildings to drown the strikers' clamor. One can only shout for so long while the speakers can go on day and night.

In such cases, it is difficult to make judgments or take sides, even secretly in one's mind. But one thing is obvious: there is an abysmal divide between the rich (department stores) and the poor (contractual workers). It is very unlikely that those picketers will get what they want. Many before them had attempted to do what they are doing now, but contractualization of work still goes on. I wondered at the futility of their attempt. Perhaps, they hoped to be the first to trigger such a change.

Quiapo was my destination the next afternoon. It has lost some of its Dickensian appeal. It looks much cleaner and more orderly than 10 years ago. There are fewer vendors along Recto Avenue, the result of the authorities' idolatrous devotion to order. Good thing the second-hand-book shops are still there. Mothers with mimeographed lists of required books of their children haggled to get the best deals for second-hand textbooks. But those who wanted to take the shortcut in the ladder of expensive education haggled with diploma and transcript counterfeiters. For a pittance, you can have any degree you want. Graham Greene's novels sold for P10 apiece. I bought five to read during my next vacation leave.

A short walk from Recto, in the area just before the Quiapo Church, pirated CDs sold like fishballs. Two women vendors animatedly talked about the raid conducted by the Video Regulatory Board a few weeks ago. One said she didn't mind having her stock of pirated CDs confiscated because she was able to see and touch the VRB's chief, Bong Revilla! She added that he was more handsome in person than in the movie "Agimat."

What is it they say about a half-empty glass? You can also look at it as half-full. And we Filipinos, with our keen sense of the tragi-comic, are certainly good at this.

Near the Quiapo Church, fortunetellers abounded, as did their clients who just came from the church. Prayers to the Black Nazarene, it seems are not enough; the people have to know what the future holds.

I tried the most popular fortuneteller, the one many people were lining up for. On my turn, the old fortuneteller told me that I would have financial and love problems that week. I pretended to be scared to hide my skepticism. However, she also said that I would be able to surmount them, that things will be OK.

Hmmm, hope! That's what fortunetellers sell! No wonder this profession thrives.

The next day it rained. I wanted to go out if only to see if Bayani Fernando's flood control preparations were working. But I didn't have to go out to know the answer. On TV were footage of the traffic jam in Balintawak caused by flooding.

That day I stayed at home and was finally able to see "Meteor Garden," the newest soap opera the young are going crazy over these days. I'd like to think I now know why it is such a hit. Aside from the good looks of the young actors, the viewers know that the story will end with the poor Shan Cai being rescued from her poverty through the love of either Dao Ming Si or Hua Ze Lei, the rich boys. And there it was again: hope.

I also saw the final episode of the Filipino soap opera "Bituin." Same thing: it ends with the antagonist Carmela (Cherie Gil) begging for the forgiveness of the blind Laura (Nora Aunor) before a crowd of concert-goers. Laura, of course, was very poor at the start of the drama but became rich through hard work, luck and prayers. And everybody lives happily ever after.

Sure, the more "pragmatic" among us can say their piece about knowing when to give up a fight whether it is for better wages or for an unrequited love. The more "serious" may not see humor in having one's merchandise confiscated by a popular action star. The more "modern" among us can say what they want about fortunetelling. And the more "cultured" among us may look down on the pedestrian, mawkish and predictable twists of soap operas. But it cannot be denied that there is in them an element of wanting things to be better, an element of hope.

And during these precarious times of SARS, flooding, sea tragedies, terrorism and incessant conflicts in Mindanao, hope may be the only thing people have.

Once upon a Maytime pilgrimage

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY

Bambi L. Harper

TWENTY-SEVEN kilometers from Manila, atop a wild and rough mountain in the legendary town of Antipolo, the venerated sanctuary of massive stones and rusted iron of the miraculous image of Our Lady of Peace and Good Voyage (Nuestra Señora de la Paz y Buen Viaje) stands upright. Before the war the zigzagging road, tilting toward the abundant Pasig was already asphalted. It crossed villages and fields, went around forests and rice fields, spanned rivers and streams, climbed hills and gulches.

The journey was made in one stretch since the open road offered no obstructions or hindrances. The pilgrim who went up to the sanctuary softly reclined in an automobile or squeezed, uncomfortable and bothered, at the back of a public bus bursting with passengers, covered the distance in less time than a cock crows: half an hour or 45 minutes at the most.

But to travel the distance in such a short time meant seeing nothing of the splendid landscape, depriving his sensibilities of the ineffable enjoyment of the beauties of the polychrome vistas. He missed the town of San Pedro Makati situated in the same limits as Manila, proclaiming its centuries-old existence in half a dozen crumbling stone mansions and in slovenly constructed dwellings. Neither could he observe the steep quarries of Guadalupe and its cordon of little houses of nipa reclining on the banks of the Pasig, half their bamboo posts nailed to the road and the others submerged in the turbulent waters of the river.

In the forbidding military confines of Fort McKinley, with its austere and well-guarded tranquility, the gigantic acacias with their somber hospitality did not succeeded in capturing his attention either.

It was possible that upon entering the municipality of Pasig, after crossing an elevated steel bridge structure with thick and resistant cross-beams of wood, his attention might have been captured by the Rizal Capitol building, imposing with its silhouette of severe architectonic lines and attractive lush gardens. But at the same time he might have overlooked the elegant symmetrical crowns of the trees and the old and new houses of wood and cement, and the ancient church that fronted the houses and park and dominated the historic capital of the province of Rizal.

In a short while he would be in Cainta and see, like lightning escaping from his view in windows and portals, the strange faces of the natives of the place whose faces had the features of the Anglo-Indian: large dark eyes, sharp, tall nose, thin lips and coppery complexion, dark and brilliant.

In Taytay, finally he would only remember that this was the last town on his route and that his car scaled the sides of the mountain of Antipolo crowned by the sanctuary of his destination. Due to the quickness of his trip, such a pilgrim had no time to observe what transpired in his surroundings.

On the other hand, the imaginative traveler would have had more than enough time to imagine pilgrimages of old. He would fancy that it wasn't in speedy cars or buses that his grandparents made the journey to the sanctuary. He would remember that fluvial and terrestrial were the combined routes that were taken to arrive at their destination and that the trip took them half a day that passed as a fiesta.

From the banks of the Pasig in the suburbs where they lived, they would leave in the early hours of the mornings of May on their joyful pilgrimage in bancas, all provided with showy canopies decorated with fringes, trimmings and flowers. Through the rapid current, the vessels would glide lightly like feathers, agilely navigating shoals and sandbanks and fish pens. Gay as castanets was the journey they undertook—the old, the young and the children very self-satisfied in their gala clothes: the women fragile and delicate in their fine piña blouses and skirts of flowing satin, and the men stiff in their *barong Tagalog* richly embroidered by hand.

Just as indispensable as the provisions they brought was the guitar or the mandolin. With gay lively tunes the young boys continuously intoned songs of love and the young girls responded with the complaining notes of a *kundiman*. The songs ended in applause and laughter that would echo in the green forests and the dense bamboo grooves at the edge of the river and in the picturesque villages asleep in their placid riverbanks.

Taytay was the end of the fluvial excursion. Here the pilgrims had to anxiously wait for the bearers of the hammocks and the drivers of *carromatas* and *carretelas* that would bring them to the sanctuary uphill. The women preferred the hammock: in groups of three or four, they would arrange themselves as though in a fluffy divan with their gathered-up feet well covered by the folds of their wide skirts. Two men of robust build would raise the hammock and passengers up and ascend to Antipolo, passing through tortuous paths and rocky crags beside vehicles pulled by spirited ponies.

Once in Antipolo, the pilgrim would notice that through the years the town had conserved the principal features of its original physiognomy. These were the same people, modest and simple, who resided in typical houses; these were the same streets, narrow and stony, that traversed their course through the town. These were the same pilgrims in the same *balintawak* or *barong Tagalog* that filled the historic temple. Above all, it was the same miraculous image venerated in the town, the same that in centuries past, according to legend, appeared on a *pandan* tree over the crest of the same mountain that today harbors her treasured sanctuary.

(From "Hispanidad," 1941.)

A different lifestyle

YOUNG BLOOD

Anne-Margaret Yu

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

I NEVER realized that one single journey to a place seven hours away from where I work would open my eyes to the realities I was blind to before. To think that from my hometown, that place was just an hour away. And yet, I had to wait until I was seven hours away to see how my life contrasted with the lives of the people in Barangay Lacnog in Tabuk, Kalinga.

I was on an official trip in connection with my job as a writer at the premier rice research institute. But as the official part of the trip ended at 3 in the afternoon, it became more of a personal journey than just a way to gather materials for some feature articles to write.

Being with those people for less than four hours was enough to make me realize that there's more to life than the luxuries and activities I am accustomed to. While I, like most other people, go crazy over the newest mobile phones that keep coming out in the market, the Kalinga men are busy tending their rice fields while the women take care of the house and cook for their families without any TV set in front of them.

While we hie off to the nearest Jollibee or McDonald's for our meals when we do not have time to cook because of our fast-paced lives, the Kalinga folk get full even just on rice mixed with boiled mongo.

While we savor our Coca-Cola or Starbucks coffee, they concoct their own rice coffee. The barangay captain served us coffee when our group went there. I hesitated to drink for fear that it might upset my stomach. I had not had my lunch yet even though it was already 2 p.m. by my watch. But I had been told beforehand never to refuse whatever the Kalinga people would offer. So, I took a sip. And I had to agree with my boss when she said that their coffee tasted good.

While we crave for chocolates or cakes every after meal, they carry with them pieces of betel nut which they chew. Afterwards, they spit it anywhere on the ground. While many of us spend good money for laser teeth whitening, our Kalinga brethren smile and show off their teeth which have all turned red from chewing their trusty betel nuts.

As if my fetish for mobile phones, burgers, sodas and desserts were not shameful enough, I still needed some Kalinga children to show me a good time even without malls or TV sets. During summer, these children like us bask under the hot rays of the sun. But unlike us who do so to get an even tan, they do so to help their elders in their rice fields. They are not only children of farmers, but, yes, they themselves are farmers.

Farmers in the barangay have adopted the hybrid rice technology that can increase rice yields by up to 15 percent. (I should know because I keep repeating that in the articles I write for the institute.)

In producing hybrid rice seeds, the male and female parent plants are planted separately, with the males planted before the females. When the plants are at the flowering stage, the pollen grains from the male parents need to reach the female parents for synchronous flowering that will lead to quality hybrid rice seeds.

In some cases when there is little wind movement, farmers need to do supplementary pollination. That's when the children come in. Armed with bamboo sticks, they walk down the male parent lines and shake them in the direction of the female parent lines planted just beside them.

I remember how I had felt goosebumps all over my skin when I watched them strut their stuff in the rice fields even at midday. I could not believe that those children, young as they were, did not have any hesitation in working even when the sun burned their skin. They were very much unlike those of us who grew up with sunblock lotions and moisturizers with certain SPF values. And they even had time to fool around with each other and pose for my camera with sincere smiles.

No matter how simple their lives are, the Kalinga people are luckier than most of us. Luckier because they do not dwell on problems such as what cell phone model to buy or what mask to wear against the SARS outbreak or the wars in Iraq and Pikit. They only have their rice fields to tend to and each other to rely on. And they survive.

I admire the fact that they never ask for more than what they have now. I suppose that's one lesson I took home with me. More than that, I learned that it's important to slow down and take one step at a time in my life.

While most of us run like crazy trying to beat time, we might want to follow the way the residents of Barangay Lacnog, now better known as "Barangay Hybrid Rice" owing to the 500 hectares of hybrid rice plants, live in simplicity and pure contentment.

Anne-Margaret Yu, 22, tries to live one day at a time while fussing over where to get her graduate degree and fighting for someone she loves whom she lost just recently.

THEY SAID

Blind

"We are operating blind."

—Coast Guard chief of Weapons, Communications, Electronics and Information System Commander Luis Imperial, bewailing their rotting equipment

Test of a truce

"Any truce offer is only as good as the principle and sincerity behind it."

—President Macapagal-Arroyo, reacting to the MILF's declaration of a unilateral 10-day ceasefire

Will to be safe

"If we're serious in maritime safety, I think it's about time that you put political will (behind the effort)."

—Vice Adm. Reuben Lista, Coast Guard commandant, speaking at a hearing conducted by the Senate committee on public services

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GMA: US visit shouldn't be given political color

I HAVE followed with great interest the published commentary on the implications of the outcomes from my recently concluded state visit to the USA. I join many of our people in noting with pleasure that most commentators welcomed the generosity and kindness of America. There seemed to be an overwhelming acceptance that what happened during my state visit constituted genuine good news for our country in an otherwise dismal season in a global scene marked by war, disease outbreak and economic slowdown.

Three threads of contrary opinion were, however, articulated by respected voices. These dissenting voices say, (a) that my state visit marked a return to a patron-client relationship between the US and the Philippines, one that is marked once more by our mendicancy and dependence, after this was ended by the 1991 closure of US bases in our country; (b) that the announced gains from the visit are mere propaganda, not reality; (c) that the gains from the visit mainly serves my personal political purposes for the benefit of my administration but also for the guidance of future administrations.

I will not offer an extended enumeration of the various gains from the visit. Published reports have already provided much of this information. In any case, I am confident that the people from sectors, institutions and regions that will directly benefit from agreements made during my visit will be the best spokespersons about the reality of these gains. Suffice it to say here that the magnitude, range and structure of the benefits we obtained merit our country's appreciation. We obtained quantitatively more valuable benefits across a wider range of concerns at a more accelerated schedule and with better targeted purposes, than we had thought attainable at these times.

I did not go to America with a begging bowl. I did not place our sovereignty on the negotiating table. I never applied to be America's girl scout in our region. America is not in search of dependents, puppets or errand girls. It is in need of authentic allies whose own security interests coincide with their global war against terrorism. The Philippines is one such ally. I believe that the world was indeed fundamentally altered by the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attacks. While fighting terrorism cannot be the end-all and be-all of human endeavor, I believe that it has become a transcendent issue that colors our other concerns, whether we like it or not. Terrorists and those who fight them will make sure that it does color our world, even if we would have preferred it otherwise.

I went to America in behalf of a country whose citizens and economy had suffered and is under continuing threat from terrorism. I had dinner at the White House that is now the vigorous fighting heart of all peoples under threat of terrorist attacks. America was generous with its support for our own struggle against terrorism. Yet the Philippines was entirely worthy of such support as Filipino blood and fortunes have been invested in prosecuting our own fight against those who inflict violence in behalf of political or religious goals. America's support for Philippine efforts is not payback for compliance, rather it is an act of solidarity of two sovereign countries engaged in common struggle where both are at risk. While the outward appearances of my state visit to the USA look similar to those of past visits by previous Philippine presidents, I believe that the underlying reality—that our relationship with America has changed significantly towards greater mutuality, equality and maturity—is completely new. Our official friendship with America is not new, but the mutuality of national interests that underlie such relationship is a new and more powerful motivation for an old friendship.

I wish to appeal to those who would seek to misappropriate the gains from my state visit in favor of whatever they may imagine to be my personal political plans in 2004. This includes not only my detractors but also my well-meaning supporters. Please refrain from tainting this national enterprise with political colors.

The whole country, the entire Filipino people, and most of all the people of Mindanao, are the main intended and eventual beneficiaries of whatever was accomplished during my state visit. Everyone else, including myself or member of my Cabinet and other leaders who participated, were merely instruments in the service of the national interest. America's generosity was extended primarily to 80 million Filipinos who, after all, are the citizens who bear the burden of securing the peace and advancing the economy.

I shall not diminish the nobility and honor associated with the two nations of America and the Philippines affirming their deep and abiding friendship with each other through my state visit. I have no wish to exact from the gains of the Filipino people any reflected glory for my supposed political plans. Our people know that their President is a much greater leader than that. And I have a much greater respect for our people to be any less.

—PRESIDENT GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO

Confusing readers with religious claims

I READ Jaime Licauco's column from time to time. I admire his insights and the way he writes his article. I am sure he is a very intelligent man who has a broad spectrum of beliefs and an open mind that welcomes other people's ideas.

However, I feel that as a writer he also has a responsibility to write an article with solid proof when it concerns religious matters and Jesus Christ, in particular.

There are thousands of subjects under the sun to write about. Why do we need to confuse the readers, particularly the weak in faith, regarding the relationship of Jesus and Mary Magdalene? Isn't it enough that morality is now a matter of personal convenience? Making Jesus and Mary's relationship sexual and sensual is no longer necessary to encourage people to be amoral. Is it not enough that the families of this century have gone awry due to this attitude?

I assure Licauco that men, especially Filipino men, do not need any further encouragement or justification to continue their promiscuous, adulterous ways.

I hope one day that while meditating, Licauco will realize that to do good, to discipline oneself and to help others are far better than to lead others or provide justification for others to pursue their own selfish ways. As a writer he has the power to make a difference.

—JOSEE MAYO

Another accident waiting to happen

I TOTALLY agree with Justice Isagani Cruz regarding the danger faced by motorists passing through the Ayala tunnel.

An equally worrisome structure is the Alabang viaduct whose repair has been ignored, delayed or whatever by authorities concerned. The viaduct was constructed way back in the 1970s and with the passing of time it must have suffered structural deterioration. This can be readily observed when you pass through the viaduct. You can feel it "swaying" due to the sheer weight of passing vehicles.

God forbid that the viaduct collapses. With a moderately strong earthquake or due to its age alone, it would not be surprising if it becomes a killer viaduct soon.

—MARTIN G. ABELLA,
26 Thailand St., Better Living Subd.,
Parañaque City

Tagbanuas could lose ancestral lands

I AM writing regarding some ancestral land that are in danger of being awarded to landgrabbers in Palawan.

The Tagbanuas of Palawan are nomadic people who live beside the sea and live on the produce of the sea as well as root crops like *corot* and *burot*. As early as the American regime, and especially during the term of President Manuel Quezon, special care was taken so as not to displace our aborigines. These people were settled in land set aside specially for them as their legal abode, such as the Calibangbangan Island in Coron, portions of Daracuton and Lalutaya Islands and the Patuyo beach land in the mainland of El Nido.

Unfortunately in Calibangbangan, Christians have intruded and many Tagbanuas have been displaced from their homes. There is rampant land-grabbing in Patuyo, where a 20-hectare portion reserved for the indigenous Tagbanuas of El Nido has been surveyed in the name of Christians, including some local officials. The survey is now in the process of approval, as recommended by the local Cenro.

The 20 hectares of surveyed land located within the Patuyo Reserved Area, if approved, are intended to be sold to foreigners who are scouting for land to develop into beach resorts or as vacation areas for rich foreigners. This land is worth millions of pesos.

Our indigenous people like the Tagbanuas will forever lose the only place they call home. That is why we ask for commitment and fast action to investigate this matter before the land is titled and sold to foreigners.

—DIOSCORO EVARLE,
El Nido, Palawan

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The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

Toronto triples tally of SARS cases

TAIPEI, Taiwan—Canada saw a three-fold increase in the current SARS infections in its renewed outbreak in Toronto after redefining cases to meet international standards, while Taiwan on Friday reported its lowest daily increase in cases in three weeks.

Meanwhile, disease fears reached remote Alaska, where a hotel refused a guest who had flown through Singapore and Hong Kong.

Singapore's incoming health minister said that although the World Health Organization will declare the island's outbreak under control as soon as Saturday, Singaporeans must stay vigilant to avoid a Toronto-style relapse.

"I think Toronto's new outbreak is a great reminder to everyone," Khaw Boon Wan told a news conference. "I'm reading reports from Toronto saying that the reason for this new outbreak is that they let their guard down too soon."

Toronto's cluster of new cases emerged last week in a harsh blow to a health care system that appeared to have brought an initial SARS outbreak in March and April under control. Health officials have told more than 7,000 people to quarantine themselves due to possible exposure.

Doctors initially reported 11 cases in the renewed outbreak, but that number was tripled Thursday to 33 after Canadian authorities broadened their definition of what constitutes a 'probable case' to meet international standards. Over the past three months, 169 people have been infected and 29 have died in Canada.

The worlwide death toll Friday was at least 753, out of more than 8,300 people infected, the vast majority of them in Asia.

Authorities in hardest-hit China stayed cautious despite a decline in cases on the mainland, announcing new fines for people who evade health checkpoints or enter quarantined areas without permission.

In Taiwan, where the SARS outbreak came to a head later than in other Asian location, officials on Friday reported only seven more SARS cases, the lowest number in three weeks.

The latest figures appeared to bolster Taiwanese officials' view that severe acute respiratory syndrome was fading on the island, ranked No. 3 in the world in deaths and infections behind China's mainland and its territory Hong Kong.

SARS fears reached as far as Alaska, where a Westmark hotel, owned by Holland America, refused to honor reservations of a mining executive who had traveled through Singapore and Hong Kong. The new policy was adopted at 13 of the company's hotels in Alaska and Canada.

"With SARS, there are a lot of unknowns and there is a risk," hotel spokesperson Erik Elvejord said.

US federal health officials said Thursday they are confident about the accuracy of the main antibody test being used to screen people for SARS.

The CDC administered the test to more than 500 people—some suspected of having SARS, some known not to be infected—and said no one tested positive for the disease who did not have it.

The test identifies an antibody to the coronavirus believed to cause SARS.

BRITISH Prime Minister Tony Blair is greeted by school children in Basra, Iraq, May 29. Blair flew into Basra from Kuwait to become the first foreign leader to visit postwar Iraq. Addressing British troops, Blair said the conflict would be remembered as "one of the defining moments of our century." AP

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MISSING WEAPONS FUROR

Rumsfeld denies US invaded Iraq under a 'false pretext'

WASHINGTON—US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld denied Thursday that the United States invaded Iraq under a "false pretext," saying it believed then and still believes that the regime of Saddam Hussein had chemical and biological weapons.

"I can assure you that this war was not waged under any false pretext," Rumsfeld said in a radio interview with Infinity Broadcasting.

"We believed then and we believe now that the Iraqis have, had chemical weapons, biological weapons, and that they had a program to develop nuclear weapons but did not have nuclear weapons," he said. "That is what the United Kingdom's intelligence suggested as well."

The failure of US forces to find any of the banned weapons since the regime's ouster seven weeks ago has raised growing questions over the weapons of mass destruction charges that served as the prime US rationale for the war.

The British government also was on the defensive Thursday after the BBC reported it had embellished a paper released in September on Baghdad's weapons of mass destruction with the claim that Iraq could deploy chemical and biological weapons in 45 minutes.

The BBC said the British intelligence agencies opposed including the assertion in the dossier because the source for it was unreliable.

And in an interview published Wednesday by Vanity Fair, US Deputy Defense Secretary Paul Wolfowitz was quoted as saying that "for bureaucratic reasons, we settled on one issue, weapons of mass destruction, because it was the one reason everyone could agree on."

Earlier this week at the Council on Foreign Relations in New York, Rumsfeld acknowledged the possibility that Iraq may have destroyed its chemical and biological weapons before the war.

Asked Thursday about the comment, the secretary said there were a number of theories about the weapons—that Iraq designed its program for "just in time delivery" so as not to maintain a large inventory of weapons, that they may have been buried, that some might have been moved to a neighboring countries.

"My personal view is not any of those because that is just intelligence chatter," he said. "My personal view is that we are going to find them."

After the 1991 Gulf War, UN inspectors uncovered Iraqi chemical, biological and nuclear programs. Baghdad also was known to have used chemical weapons in the 1980s against its ethnic Kurdish minority and against Iran.

Iraq insisted during the most recent confrontation, however, that it had destroyed all its weapons of mass destruction.

Rumsfeld said the reason no weapons have been found "is not because they are not there—we believe they are there."

He noted the discovery of two tractor-trailers in Iraq which US intelligence concluded this week were probably designed and equipped to make biological agents.

"People are saying why haven't we found anything, and I would respond by saying, A, it's going to take some time, and, B, we have found things," he said. *AFP*

US to track student-visa violators

PHILADELPHIA—The US Department of Homeland Security will be ready by Aug. 1 to begin searching for thousands of foreign nationals who may have violated the terms of their student visas, an official said.

But Chris Bentley, spokesperson for Homeland Security's Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement, said authorities would concentrate on suspected risks to national security rather than try to go after everyone suspected of a visa violation.

Bentley said as many as 10,000 people may have violated the terms of their student visas, double the 5,000-strong force of federal agents available to enforce immigration rules.

Violations often occur when visa holders leave school for work without notifying immigration authorities. Violators face detainment and deportation.

"Do we have the resources to apprehend every student that violates their status? Probably not," Bentley told Reuters in a telephone interview from Baltimore.

The Bush administration decided to tighten monitoring of foreign students after the Sept. 11, 2001 attacks in which hijackers flew three commercial airliners into the World Trade Center and the Pentagon. A fourth crashed in rural Pennsylvania during an apparent revolt by passengers.

A federal report released a year ago found that US immigration authorities granted student visas to two of the 19 suspected hijackers months after the attacks.

Immigration agents are assembling a database known as the Student and Exchange Visitor Information System, or Sevis, to track some 1.2 million foreign students living in the United States.

US schools and universities have until Aug. 1 to provide Sevis with information on all foreign students enrolled at their institutions. *Reuters*

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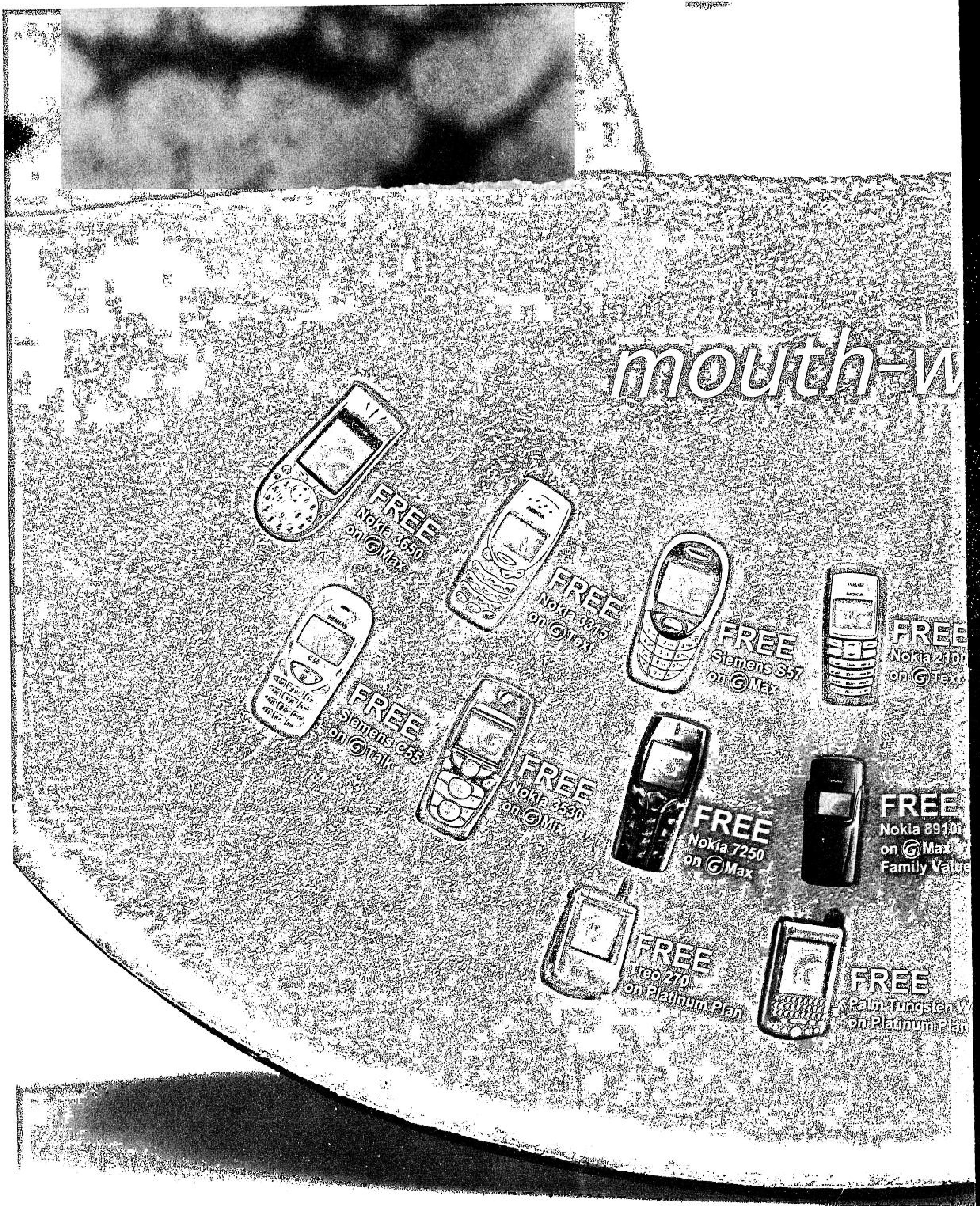
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Sharon-Abbas roadmap talks 'very positive'

JERUSALEM—Palestinian prime minister Mahmud Abbas and his Israeli counterpart Ariel Sharon held "very positive" talks late Thursday on steps to launch a US-backed peace roadmap, officials from both sides said.

Palestinian officials said the two premiers decided to issue a joint statement on the roadmap at their summit with US President George W. Bush on June 4 in the Jordanian Red Sea resort of Aqaba.

Israel also agreed to release two long-term Palestinian prisoners, including a senior PLO member, Information Minister Nabil Amr told AFP.

He said Israel was to free Taysir Khaled, a member of the PLO executive committee and political bureau of the hardline Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine.

The two-and-a-half-hour meeting was "very positive and the Israeli side promised to take some good steps to reduce the suffering of the Palestinian people," Amr said.

A statement issued by Sharon's office said the meeting was held in "a very good and positive atmosphere".

The two leaders met at Sharon's west Jerusalem office to discuss steps to launch the peace plan ahead of the Jordan summit, which is to take place a day after Bush meets with Arab leaders in Egypt.

In the Jerusalem meeting, Israel "pledged to take some measures to pave the way for a comprehensive implementation of the roadmap," Abbas' office said in a statement, without giving details.

It described the talks as "serious, candid and beneficial." Both sides would continue meeting and work on making the roadmap a success, the Palestinian prime minister's office said.

But ahead of the meeting, Sharon pledged in a televised address that "Israel will never let go of Jerusalem," angering the Palestinians.

The Jewish state seized Arab east Jerusalem, which the Palestinians want as the capital of a future state of their own and whose fate remains at the core of the dispute, in the 1967 Middle East war.

Jerusalem is "the key to peace in this area. Without holy Jerusalem as the capital of a Palestinian state, there will be no peace," warned Nabil Abu Rudeina, a top aide of Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat.

The roadmap calls for a halt to settlement activity on Palestinian land.

The blueprint, published a month ago and reluctantly accepted by the Israeli cabinet on Sunday, paves the way for the creation of a Palestinian state by 2005 but also demands an end to attacks by radical Palestinian groups.

Meanwhile violence raged on the ground. A Palestinian was killed and at least one other wounded when an Israeli tank fired a flechette round at a town in central Gaza, Palestinian medical and security sources said.

Mohammed Abu Sbeitan, 21, was killed in Deir al-Balah by the lethal shell which sprays thousands of darts over hundreds of meters (yards), the sources said.

But Israeli military sources denied the report, saying no firing had taken place in the area.

Elsewhere Israeli troops shot dead a militant from the hardline Islamic group Hamas during a raid into the southern Gaza city of Khan Yunis, Palestinian security sources said.

Relatives said the 24-year-old had been wounded and was being carried to his house when soldiers shot him dead in a nearby street.

Earlier, in the northern West Bank city of Jenin, a gunman belonging to Islamic Jihad was gunned down by Israeli troops, the group's local leader and Palestinian medical sources told AFP.

Both sides were under pressure to show results from the Jerusalem talks, the second such meeting in two weeks between Abbas and Sharon, ahead of their summit with Bush. *AFP*

Bush says he has no Iran 'preoccupation'

WASHINGTON—US President George W. Bush said on Thursday he had no "preoccupation" with Iran, and a government official said consideration of new get-tough measures against Tehran had been put off indefinitely amid divisions in the administration.

"There's no preoccupation" with Iran, Bush said in an interview with French television ahead of his trip to Europe and the Middle East to begin on Friday.

Bush said, however, he was concerned that operatives of the al-Qaida network were present in Iran and said any members there should be arrested and handed over to authorities in their home countries.

US officials said the administration had not rescheduled a high-level policy meeting on Iran put off earlier this week.

"This high-level policy review is not going to happen.

Things have been indefinitely put off," said a government official familiar with the debate, spurred by charges that Tehran supports terrorism and is interfering in attempts to establish a democratic government in Iraq.

Time pressures ahead of Bush's departure on Friday were partly responsible for the scrapped meeting, the official said.

But he said a consensus on new steps to pressure Iran continued to elude the administration, with the Pentagon and Vice President Dick Cheney's office taking a hard line and the State Department and National Security Council favoring a more cautious approach.

"I think this fight will keep going for some time," Bush said.

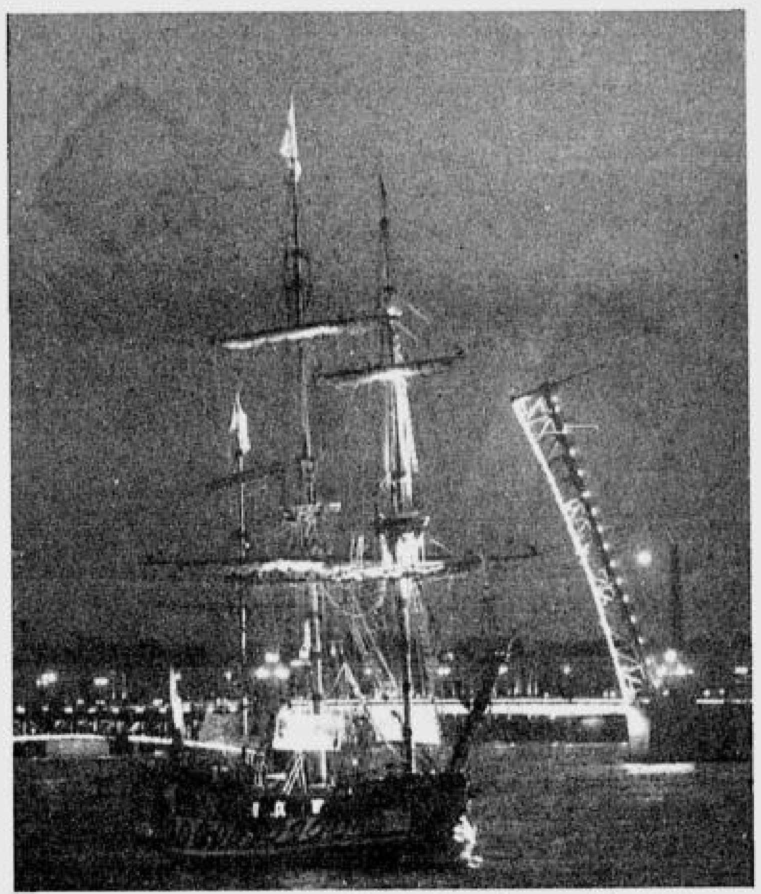
Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, asked in a radio interview Thursday whether the United States was gearing up for war with Iran, said "not to my knowledge."

But in the interview with Infinity radio he said "reasonable people assume" Iran would possess nuclear weapons "sometime in this decade." Rumsfeld also accused Tehran of broadcasting radio programs "trying to stir up people in Iraq to oppose the (US-led) coalition."

US officials have said intelligence suggests senior al-Qaida members hiding in Iran may have had prior knowledge of the May 12 bombings in Saudi Arabia. The White House said on Wednesday that Tehran's recent arrests of al-Qaida members fell short of US demands for action.

Iran has denied nuclear weapons ambitions. Iranian Foreign Minister Kamal Karrazi said this week his country and other neighbors of Iraq wanted to play a postwar role in the establishment of a democratic government in Iraq.

US officials earlier this week confirmed an Iran-policy meeting set for Tuesday had been put off, with some saying it would be held on Thursday. White House spokesperson Ari Fleischer said he could not confirm the meeting on Iran had been planned for Thursday. Other officials said no meeting was held. *Reuters*



A REPLICA of Peter the Great's sailing vessel "Standart" sails past the opened Troitsky bridge on the Neva river in St. Petersburg, Russia, May 30. AP

World leaders gather for St. Petersburg bash

ST. PETERSBURG, Russia—World leaders gather in Russia on Friday to mark the 300th birthday of the old czarist capital, a glittering occasion many hope will help dispel lingering rancor over the Iraq war.

It will be the first time all the key players in the bitter debate over the US-led Iraq invasion will be together since the war began in March.

The three-day celebrations in St. Petersburg—its palaces and canals spruced up with a $1.5 billion renovation some critics say Russia can ill-afford—comes just days before the world's seven largest industrial economies and Russia hold their annual G8 summit in France.

Friday's arrivals in St. Petersburg include British Prime Minister Tony Blair, fresh from a trip to Iraq, and his main opponents over the war there—French President Jacques Chirac and German Chancellor Gerhard Schroeder.

Blair was the first Western leader to visit postwar Iraq, where he dismissed renewed controversy over the reasons for toppling the government of Saddam Hussein.

France, Germany and Russia led resistance to attempts by Washington and London to win United Nations support for the invasion, saying UN inspectors needed first to complete their search for alleged weapons of mass destruction in Iraq.

On Saturday, they will be joined for dinner by US President George W. Bush at the Peterhof palace, Russia's answer to Versailles facing the Baltic Sea.

More than 40 leaders—including most of the heads of former Soviet states—will come to Putin's hometown of St. Petersburg, the largest crowd of dignitaries to visit Russia's "window on the West" since czarist times.

Renamed Petrograd during World War One and called Leningrad in Soviet times, the city was planted on the watery wastelands of Russia's Baltic coast in 1703 by Czar Peter the Great. *Reuters*

'Cultural capital' inspired writers under czars, Reds

ST. PETERSBURG, Russia—The once-squalid square that served as the setting for "Crime and Punishment" is now home to a McDonald's.

Dostoyevsky devotees say this apartment, in the author's mind, was the apartment of Raskolnikov, one of the most famous protagonists in literature.

It's one of the many literary landmarks in St. Petersburg, a city whose grandeur and grit have inspired Russian writers for three centuries.

"St. Petersburg is like a magician—it has a powerful attractive force and fosters creative work," said Svetlana Konoplyova, a retired literature teacher who works at a museum honoring the poet Alexander Pushkin in the apartment where he died after a duel in 1837.

"This city is the cultural capital of our Russia," said Konoplyova.

Pushkin's epic "The Bronze Horseman" took its subject from a statue of city founder Czar Peter the Great that will be the backdrop when President Vladimir Putin greets foreign leaders Friday amid the imperial capital's 300th anniversary celebration.

The chaos of the city during the Bolshevik Revolution comes alive in the verse of Alexander Blok.

Anna Akhmatova, a leading 20th century poet whose husband was shot and son imprisoned by the communist authorities, mixed her fierce love for the city with a bitter disdain for its new masters, calling it her "blessed cradle" but comparing it to a "drunken harlot" under the Bolsheviks.

Vladimir Nabokov, who emigrated to America, wrote evocatively of his childhood in an apartment not far from the Bronze Horseman statue.

The last Russian writer to receive the Nobel Laureate in Literature, Joseph Brodsky, was also a native of St. Petersburg. *AP*

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Justice for slain radioman assured

LUCENA CITY—President Macapagal-Arroyo assured the family of slain dwTI commentator Apolinario "Polly" Pobeda that she would do everything to render justice to the victim.

Antonio Pobeda, a retired police superintendent and uncle of the slain broadcaster, told the INQUIRER that the President has also declared her full support to Polly's family.

Pobeda said the victim's family met with the President during the latter's visit in Alabang on Thursday.

At least three assailants were said to have gunned down the commentator on May 17.

Meanwhile, a top official of Task Force Polly yesterday revealed that contrary to .reports, all the recovered items from the suspects during the arrest remained intact and were ready to be presented in due time.

He also dismissed the allegation of a whitewash on the investigation of the broadcaster's murder.

Senior Supt. Ricardo Padilla, Quezon police chief and head of Task Force Polly, stressed that no missing items were recovered from the arrested suspects, Eulogio Patulay and his brother Eric.

He said Task Force Polly could not present the items to the public as he expressed apprehension that some quarters could muddle the case.

But a reliable source said among the items seized were a memorandum receipt for the cal. 45 pistol, which was allegedly signed by a police official and a local government official. A "security aide" identification card also duly signed by the local government official was also part of the recovered items, the source said, aside from two cellular phones allegedly owned by the suspects.

The mobile phones also contained revealing data, according to the source.

In another development, Supt. Danny Ramon Siongco, Lucena City police chief, has filed an indefinite leave of absence from his post effective today "to erase doubts on the impartiality of the investigation" surrounding Pobeda's murder.

"To help erase any suspicion that my office is being used in the supposed whitewashing of the case, I voluntarily offered to take a leave of absence. The investigation should be free from any shade of doubt," he said.

The family of the victim admitted that they have been receiving information of an impending whitewash on the Pobeda murder. "But we're still doubtful about the reports of the planned whitewash," Pobeda said.

The INQUIRER learned that the results of the ballistic examination on the two guns, cal. 45 and cal. 9mm pistols that were recovered from the suspects, turned out to be negative.

But Padilla maintained that even if the guns turned out negative in the ballistic examination, "the positive identification of the eyewitness bears more weight in the overall appreciation of the case."

Lucena City Mayor Ramon Talaga Jr. dared Task Force Polly to disclose all the revealing items that were supposedly recovered from the suspects.

The arrested suspects have been linked to Talaga allegedly as "bodyguards" of his son Councilor Romano Talaga. But the elder Talaga insisted that the two were just "volunteer campaign companions" and not their security aides.

Talaga maintained that the lone eyewitness by the TFP "is a false witness out to mislead the investigation." He said an Air Force official had told him the suspects were not the gunmen. *Delfin Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Countdown for Justice

WAPILE

IT IS exactly 383 days today since Pagadian journalist Edgar Damalerio was slain in cold blood. The principal suspect, police officer Guillermo Wapile, remains at large after escaping while in the custody of the police.

Born Again pastor held for murder of female boarder

TUGUEGARAO CITY—A Born Again Christian pastor was charged with murder for allegedly killing his 20-year-old boarder in Barangay San Gabriel on May 25.

Supt. Crispulo Casilanan, city police chief, said Jaime Ramos, a pastor, was charged before the city trial court on Friday for the murder of Roxanne Fernandez, 20, a computer technician.

Casilanan said Fernandez's parents became worried when she failed to go home to Solana town on May 25. The parents went to Ramos' house, where Fernandez was boarding, on May 27 to check on her condition.

But police said the parents were surprised when Ramos met them and immediately led them to an area behind the kitchen. Ramos reportedly told the parents that he smelled something foul from that portion of the house and that this could be the decomposing body of Fernandez.

Ramos and Fernandez's parents, after digging a shallow grave at the back of the kitchen, found Fernandez's body covered with cardboard boxes.

Ramos did not resist arrest when policemen arrived.

Dr. Eugenio Dayag, city health officer, said Fernandez died of strangulation using an aluminum wire. She was also stabbed in the neck and was hacked in the face.

Police records showed that Ramos had served prison terms in the national penitentiary in Muntinlupa for murder and frustrated murder charges. Members of a Born Again Christian group recruited Ramos to become a pastor while he was serving his prison term. *Estanislao Caldez, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Negros Oriental governor blames mayors for rampant illegal gravel, sand quarrying

By Romy Amarado, *PDI Visayas Bureau*

DUMAGUETE CITY—Some mayors in Negros Oriental are partly to be blamed for the rampant illegal extraction of sand and gravel in the province, said Negros Oriental Gov. George Arnaiz.

He told the INQUIRER that his field personnel reported to him that some local officials, including mayors, intervened in the arrests of persons believed to be involved in illegal sand and gravel extraction.

The governor, however, refused to name the mayors.

But he stressed that as deputies of the governor, the mayors should be in the forefront in the implementation of the law against sand and gravel extraction.

Members of the newly formed task force against sand and gravel extraction have complained that some mayors used their position and influence to help friends and associates apprehended for illegal transport or extraction of sand and gravel.

Sometimes, the violators were the local government units themselves.

Last Monday, the task force apprehended five trucks of the Tanjay City government at the Tanjay River, in Barangay Novallas, Tanjay for quarrying sand and gravel without the required permit from the provincial government.

A member of the task force who requested anonymity claimed that Tanjay Mayor Baltazar Salma berated them and ordered the police to release the trucks.

When reached by phone, Salma initially denied the apprehension of the city's trucks.

But when informed that the information came from the governor's office, the mayor explained that the sand and gravel taken from Tanjay River would be used for the City's road projects in Barangays Luca, Pal-ew and San Isidro.

He denied the allegation that he berated the task force members. He added that he was not aware that the task force members were from the governor's office which was deputized to enforce the laws on sand and gravel extraction.

About two weeks ago, Arnaiz formed the task force following persistent reports of massive illegal sand and gravel extraction in the province.

The task force is composed of four members from the Negros Oriental Police Office and eight from the provincial government's Environment and Natural Resources Management Division.

The task force is mandated to operate against illegal extraction 24 hours a day.

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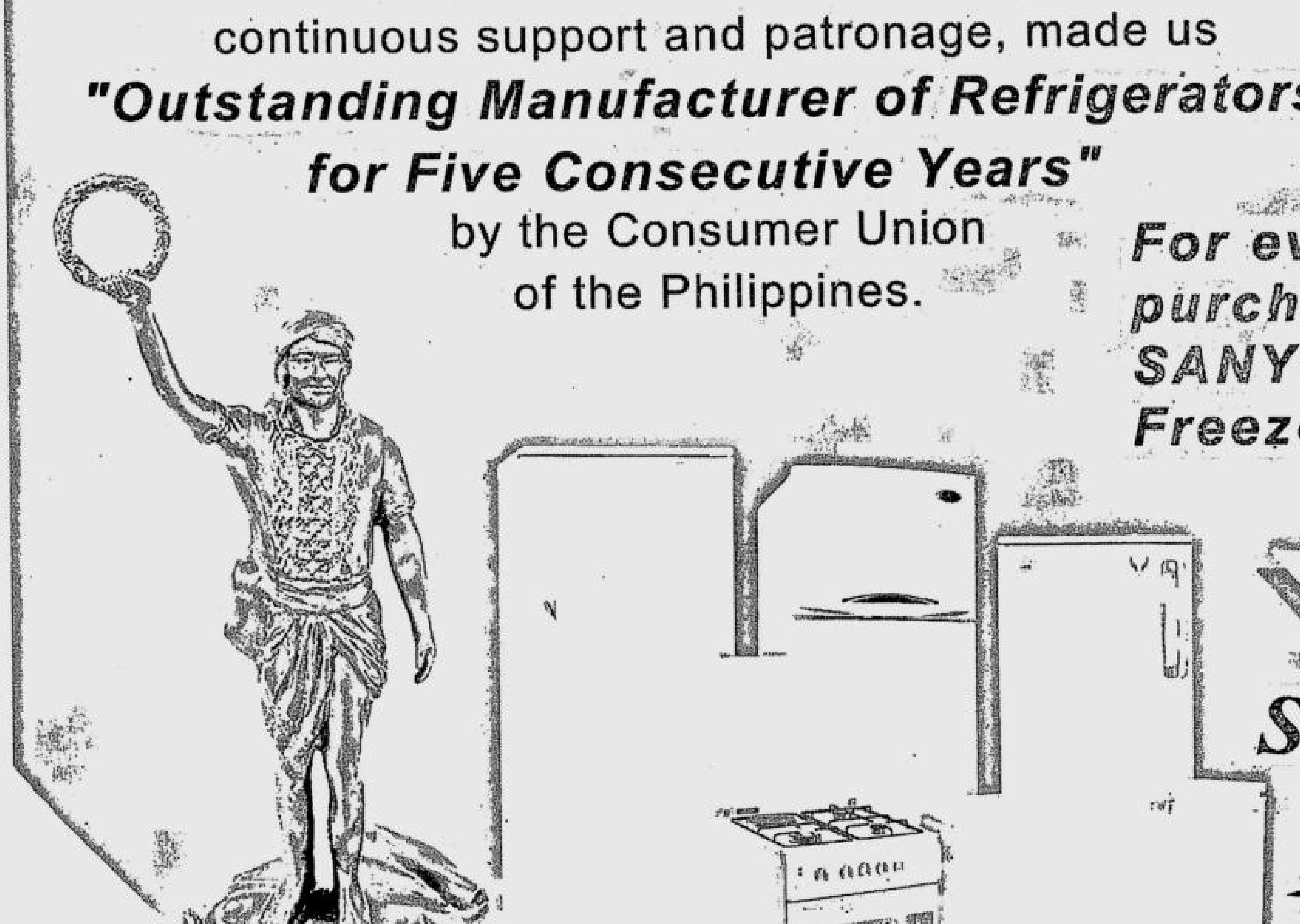

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Summer program helps kids with reading difficulties

By Ma. Diosa Labiste
Maasin, Iloilo

SUMMER vacation in Maasin town, 29 km from Iloilo City, means spinning tops, climbing trees, swimming in the river and circumcision.

But 75 children did not put away their books because they were to undergo remedial lessons in reading. When the school term ended in late March, they were given a set of 20 booklets, colorful magnetic letters and words in stacks of neon flash cards to read.

They spent the next two months of summer honing their reading skills, with which they had difficulty during the school year.

Justin, 7, said he had to be retained in Grade 1 this school year because he could not read. But he said that when he goes back to school in June, he would be able to read, or even read better than any of his classmates.

His friends—Regie, JR, Melchor and Rodney—said they spent their summer practicing how to read and learn more English words. "*Nami ang mga libro* (The books are nice)," said JR.

The five boys were among the pupils at the Daja and Nagba elementary schools who had difficulty reading. A diagnostic test conducted by the Department of Education in the two schools showed that 140 or 51 percent of the pupils from Grades 1-3 have reading difficulty.

A second test made by the Save the Children, a development organization helping children and communities, noted that these children had reading skills below the requirement for their grade level. For example, they are already in Grade 3, yet their reading skills are on the level of Grade 1.

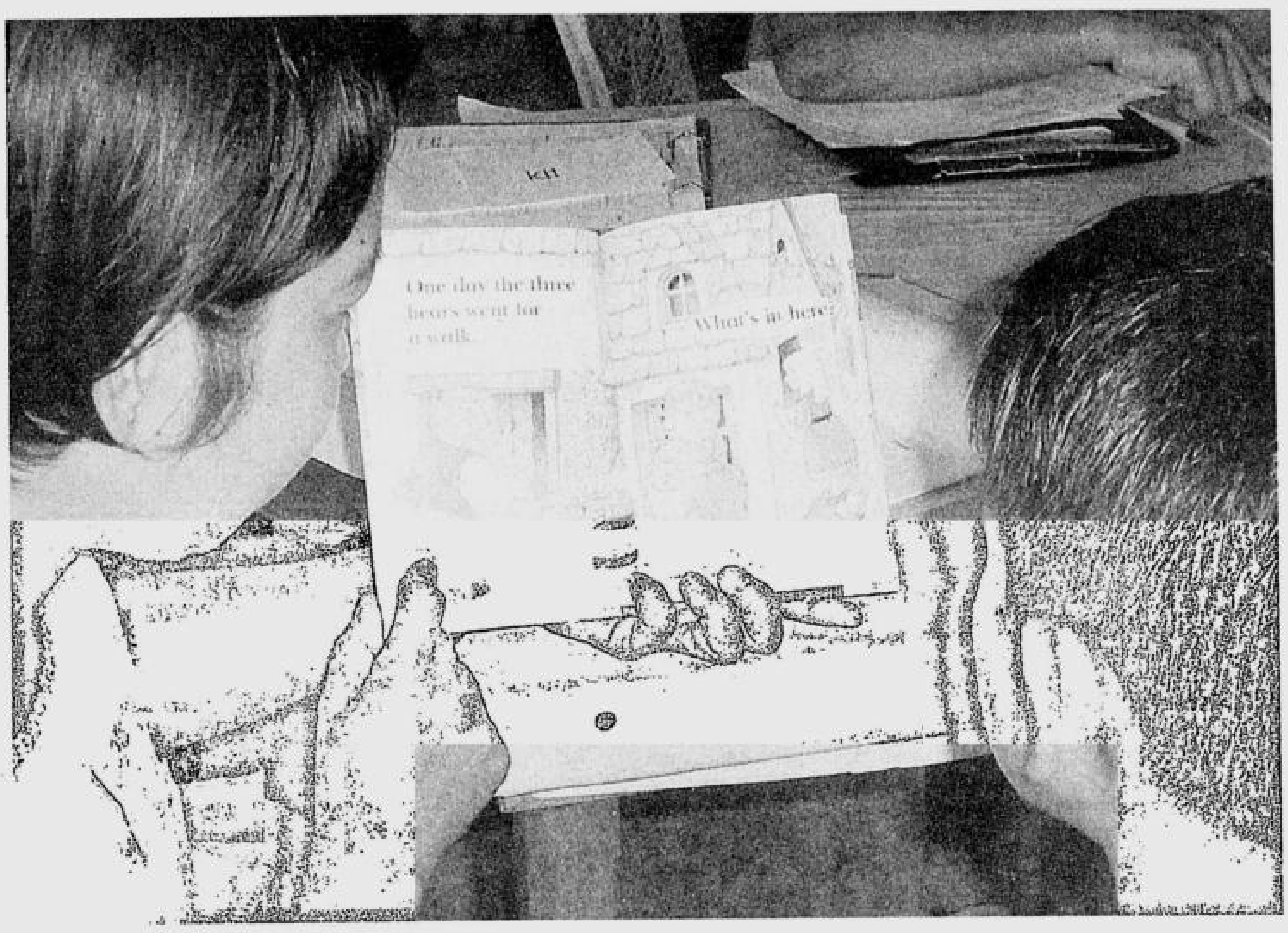
Erna Bermudo, an English teacher at the Daja Elementary School, said many children in her school could not read sight words, such as "to," "we," "it" and "they." Sight words are those that readers often encounter when they read. They include prepositions, pronouns and conjunctions.

Other children can read, but are very slow or do not understand what they are reading. "Hope for the slow and non-readers is reading remediation. Our goal is that they be able to catch up when they are back in school," said Bermudo.

Community-based

Launched in Barangays Daja and Nagba this summer was a remedial reading program dubbed "Basa Para sa Bata" (Reading for Kids).

A community-based project of the Save the Children, it drew support from school teachers, parents, college students, village officials and volunteers who gave time to get involved in an eight-week project. Except for the staff of Save the Children, all were volunteers.



A COMMUNITY reading volunteer at work

PHOTO COURTESY OF SAVE THE CHILDREN PHILIPPINES FIELD OFFICE

Lucila Castillanos, 42, was one of the 28 Community Reading Volunteers (CRVs) for the project. A mother of four, she had committed to spend two to three hours every Saturday to teach five to six children to read.

She also checked up on the children if they had read their booklets. At the end of project, she would assist in administering tests to assess the children's reading levels.

But the crucial work was assigned to parents and caregivers who pledged to spare 30 minutes a day to help a child practice reading. After eight weeks, the child and parent were expected to complete 28 hours of reading.

Both parents and CRVs went through a training course on how to mentor children to read, spell and write, as well as how to use the readers' booklets, magnetic spelling board and flash cards.

A CRV was also in charge of a mobile-library, a bag containing 10 to 20 titles. These colorfully illustrated books were for the children to borrow when they had little confidence in their reading ability.

The Save the Children and their CRVs hope that by the end of the project, the 141 children in Daja and Nagba have achieved their desired reading levels and learned to love reading.

The Iloilo Division of Schools under the Department of Education has endorsed the project.

Many reasons

There are many reasons why children in Nagba and Daja have reading difficulty.

Bermudo said that often, the parents were too busy eking out a livelihood that they have no time to sit down and read with the children. Some parents are also non-readers and have no means to buy books and reading materials.

Justin said her mother did not teach him to read because she was busy with housework. Other boys said their parents seldom reminded them to read. But with the reading project, their parents have sat down with them after supper to read.

Nagba and Daja are communities of upland farmers and weavers of *amakan* (bamboo mats), baskets and makers of *sukdap* (bamboo strips used to tie two bamboo poles). Bermudo said many parents stayed up late at night to work on bamboo mats and strips and no longer had the time to teach their children to read.

The children's poor performance in school has also been blamed on malnutrition and the number of children a family has. Some children go to school without eating breakfast while some parents said they have too many children, said Bermudo.

Nagba and Daja have no reading centers and the only books the children can read are their textbooks. The school libraries have limited titles and have no newspapers and magazines, said Esteban Lopera, principal of the Nagba Elementary School.

Lumensita Cartagena, principal of Maasin Central Elementary School and reading specialist, said children who were weak in reading might also be weak in problem solving, making inference, following directions and understanding their lessons. When some children feel that they lag behind their lessons, they would be absent from their class or drop out of school, she said.

The reading project in Nagba and Daja is a pilot project of the Save the Children for rural communities. Parañaque City in Metro Manila hosts the pilot reading project for an urban area.

The Save the Children's Mary Ann Salem said the reading project was being evaluated in May and the result would be available to nongovernment organizations and local government units that wish to duplicate it.

"At an investment of at least P150 per child, the returns are worth it," said Salem.

New thrills spring from Mambukal

BOAT rides can be done in the blue lagoon at the center of the resort.

ANDY ALVAREZ

By Carla P. Gomez
Murcia, Negros Occidental

THE THRILL of walking on a hanging bridge 13 meters (40 feet) above the ground shielded from the sun by a canopy provided by century-old trees, sliding down a 4.5-m (15-ft) high "slide for life," or going for a more sedate boat ride down a blue lagoon.

These are among the many attractions now being offered at the newly renovated Mambukal Resort in Murcia town in Negros Occidental, that is now open to the public.

Mambukal, owned by the provincial government, was developed by a Japanese architect in 1927 but was closed to the public for renovation early this year.

The 23-hectare resort, a ride of 30-45 minutes from Bacolod City, is about 366 m (1,200 ft) above sea level and on the northwest base of the equally famous Mt. Kanlaon Natural Park. It is surrounded by a sylvan jungle of tropical and semi-tropical trees, pines, flowering plants and shrubs, including 400 species of ferns, nurtured by abundant waters from brooks, streams and seven waterfalls that flow into the lagoon at the center of the resort and empty into a river.

The resort also boasts of sulfur springs and boiling mud that are said to be health cures.

Estela Dumadag Lopez of EGD Lopez and Partners, the renovation consultant, said improvements, including the building of new cottages, were all designed to blend with nature and to be Asian-Philippine in character.

"The structures were designed not to stand out so that emphasis is on nature," she said.

Canopy walk

Among the added attractions is the 145-m canopy walk through century-old trees.

Kerry Asuncion, who designed the walk, said it was made of aircraft cable and fiberglass connected to trees like a hanging bridge. The walk has six stations and five bridges that vary from 4.5-12 m (15-40 ft) high, he said.

The resort also has a rock-climbing wall while a "slide for life" is still being set up.

The slide for life enables thrill seekers to slide diagonally down a 4.5-m high cable held on with safety harnesses, Asuncion said.

Backup cables will be set up for safety purposes, and one's fall will be controlled, he said. One can ask for a "low fall" or "scream" to slide faster, he added.

Lopez said a 1.6-km trail allowed a visitor to take a leisurely walk to the waterfalls.

So far, 10 city governments in the province have built cottages at the western side of the resort, all of them similarly designed, she said. Two cottages will be added soon, and more cottages and a spa will be built in the eastern side of the resort, she said.

Visitors can now also enjoy a newly renovated swimming pool and a therapeutic warm dipping pool.

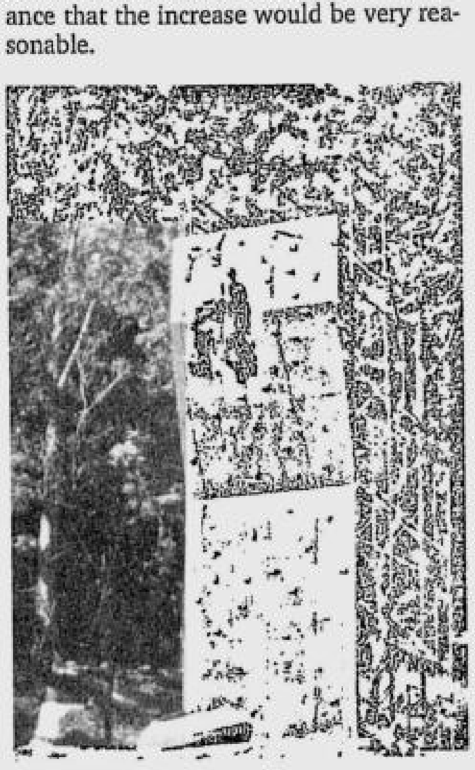
For all ages

"We will have something for people of all ages," Lopez said, pointing out that a playground will also be set up for children.

Gov. Joseph Maranon said the provincial government had allocated P40 million for the renovation of the resort, which included cementing two kilometers of road leading to it.

The provincial government collects a minimal entrance fee of P10 for each visitor and another P10 per vehicle that enters the park.

Because of the cost of renovation, the province plans to increase the rates once an ordinance for the new entrance fees is enacted. Officials, however, gave an assurance that the increase would be very reasonable.



THE ROCK climbing wall

ANDY ALVAREZ

Bad news, good news

Lucid Interval

Rowena V. Guanzon

BACOLOD may be the capital city of Negros Occidental, but in gender and development programs, its first woman mayor, Joy Valdez, has not made a difference.

When the city council passed a resolution for the mayor to form a council for women, she did not act on it. When her city health officer ordered the detention of suspected prostituted women in a city government building, we heard nothing of it. Valdez has the potentials of an outstanding mayor if only she can focus on the real work and not the next election.

In a summit of local women chief executives and legislators initiated by the Commission on Women, it was Mayor Santiago Barcelona of Escalante who presented his city's Quick Response system for cases of violence against women. Escalante is constructing a women's crisis center from its P8-million Gender and Development (GAD) budget.

Compare that with a P500,000-GAD budget of Bacolod, instead of the required P30 million, out of a total of P600 million. With this shameful budget, Bacolod cannot fully support a women's center where abused women and children go for help, and has cut its aid to a shelter for abused girls run by nuns. The city government has no legal services for abused women and girls despite a high incidence of cases of violence against women.

* * *

IN THE SUMMIT of women mayors, governors and Sanggunian members on May 15, some 200 participants resolved to work for the sectoral representation of women in all Sanggunian.

A law is needed to implement Section 41 of the Local Government Code, which states that in all Sanggunian, there should be three sectoral representatives—women, workers and one other sector as may be determined by the Sanggunian. A bill on local sectoral representation was filed in 1998 by Akbayan's Etta Rosales. In the Senate, this bill has a low priority maybe because it does not have the support of mayors.

Even when women voters outnumber men in their localities, representation of women in the Sanggunian remains low. According to Director Rex Reyes of the Department of Interior and Local Government in Western Visayas, it is about 26 percent with only 196 women out of 740 men.

Escalante breaks the pattern with six women and four men. In other towns and cities of Negros Occidental, the number ranges from one to three women, and none in the cities of Talisay and Silay.

If no affirmative action is done through a law or through political parties, this trend is likely to continue because of the obstacles women face that discourage them from running for office. Aside from the costs of elections, women face the double burden of household work, including caring for children and work outside the home.

Opponents of the bill say that poor municipalities cannot afford the salaries of three sectoral members. If that is so, the law can provide that at least the women's sectoral representative must have a seat. Lack of money is a poor excuse when you consider that women have a right and need to participate in the decision-making in local governments.

* * *

THE ANTI-TRAFFICKING In Persons Law or Republic Act 9802 was signed by President Macapagal-Arroyo in the presence of women's groups. Senate President Franklin Drilon stood out as the only man in the picture, having earned his rightful place there. True, if not for Drilon's personal intervention, this law would not have been passed.

The next intense lobby of women's groups led by Sibol is the Anti-Abuse of Women in Intimate Relations Bill, authored in the House of Representatives by Rep. Bellaflor Angara-Castillo.

AWARDING Doronila are Manila Rotary Club president, Oscar M. de Baybay (right) and Rodolfo Reyes, chair of the Journalism Awards.
RANDY HORMILLOSA

Rotary Club of Manila honors 5 PDI journalists

From page A1

of The Philippine Star; Teodoro Benigno Jr., Star columnist, and Jessica Soho, acting news director of GMA-7.

Ex-press secretary Rod Reyes, chair of the awards committee, said this year's awardees "have all lived up to the lofty ideals of the journalism profession."

In-depth analyses

According to the board of judges chaired by former Senate president Jovito Salonga, De Quiros' "sagacious and in-depth analyses of socio-political issues, particularly those touching on social welfare and injustices, as well as his light and witty essays on man's frivolities, have made an endearing impact on a cross-section of readers, stimulating their appreciation of current developments through his fine craftsmanship in blending traditional journalism and literary prose."

Esplanada "and his breed of reporters are exemplars of how journalism can work to comfort the afflict and afflict the comfortable," the panel said.

"Mr. Esplanada's work in the year 2002, among them exposes on the abusive practices of health maintenance organizations or HMOs, non-existent Medicare beneficiaries and the billions and billions of pesos in benefits owed by the government to war veterans, underline very clearly the public good that responsible journalism performs."

De Quiros was not able to attend the awards rites. In brief remarks, Esplanada said he agreed with Doronila, who had written in one of his columns that the "fanciful term investigative journalism is basically rigorous reporting." Esplanada shared his award with his "colleagues in the INQUIRER where rigorous reporting is SOP (standard operating procedure)."

No retirement

In accepting his award, Doronila joked that being elevated to the Hall of Fame was "like being given the signal to retire, write books and memoirs."

Cunanan said that after 20 years of writing she was "not about to retire. I'm just warming up . . . it's a great time to write. Momentous events are unfolding."

After the rites, Doronila collapsed. He is now in stable condition, undergoing treatment at the Manila Doctors Hospital.

Launched in 1966, the RCM Journalism Awards were organized to "honor outstanding contributions of individuals in the tri-media: print, television and radio."

In 1972, however, the group stopped giving the awards. "The silent message was that since there was no real freedom of the press, there was no sense in holding the awards," Reyes recalled.

"With the return of democracy and the renewed vitality of the Fourth Estate, the journalism awards resumed in 1986 and have since carried on the club's commitment to encourage the proper development of local journalism and give recognition to the excellence of Filipino journalists and their work," said Reyes, who was assisted by the Philippine Communication Gentrum Foundation in overseeing this year's contest.

Senate blue ribbon committee chair Joker Arroyo, the keynote speaker, cited the awardees for having demonstrated that journalism is public service.

Board of judges

Aside from Salonga and Reyes, the other members of the board of judges were Alice Colet-Villadolid, trustee of the Asian Institute of Journalism; Jose Pavia, executive director of the Philippine Press Institute; former DSWD secretary and Civil Service Commission chair Corazon Alma de Leon; Rolando Estabillo, Philippine Airlines vice president for corporate communications; Chichi Fajardo-Robles, head of the Far Eastern University department of communications; Tomas Banguis Jr., also AB Communications president; former PCGG commissioner Quintin Doromal, now president of Dumangas Development Foundation; ex-Dean Georgina Reyes Encanto of the UP College of Mass Communications; former Press Undersecretary Ramy Diez, and Calixto Chikiamco, president of Music Net Phils. Inc.

The new RCM trophy, conceptualized by Rotarian Tomas Banguis Jr., features "flame feathers made of narra and simulated paper done on brass material."

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REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Corporate Coalition Against S.A.R.S.

US investors gung-ho on RP, say US senators

From page A1

cause the government through the DFA had accepted his apology.

"Ambassador Takano said his comments do not reflect the official views of his government," Ebdalin added.

The President, who is to visit Japan next week after a trip to South Korea, described Takano's remarks as "exaggerated and unfair."

"We appreciate his candor but it is regrettable that the gains we have achieved so far have not been acknowledged," she told business groups at the Dusit Hotel during a briefing on her US state visit.

But the President said her administration took "such criticism as a challenge for us to do better."

"Japan has been very helpful to our economy and to the maintenance of law and order. We hope the Japanese ambassador will be able to catch up on his sleep," she said.

Japan is a big creditor and provider of development aid to the Philippines and plays a major role in the Asian Development Bank, which has its headquarters in Manila.

'Very good' business climate

In Malacañang earlier yesterday, Ricciardone described the business climate in the Philippines as "very good."

He voiced more superlatives, saying: "This very high interest in the United States [to do business in the Philippines] is higher than ever. The American companies that are already here are as eager as ever to expand their business and encourage others to come.

"And we in the American embassy [in Manila] support that and encourage it."

Ricciardone said that at a recent luncheon, he gave the American Chamber of Commerce in the Philippines a "readout of the talks in Washington" made by Ms Macapagal with "many, many" American business people.

He pointed out that a number of US companies had been in the Philippines for a long time. "This is a steady interest and, I would say, a commitment to doing business here," he said.

Senator Hagel said there was "tremendous interest" among US companies to do more business in the Philippines because of their "very clear recognition that our two countries are closely linked and have been for over 100 years—and that translates into economic issues, strong economic connections."

Hagel, a member of the US Senate committees on intelligence, foreign relations, and banking, housing and urban affairs, said he, Reed and Ricciardone discussed with Ms Macapagal a number of issues of "mutual interest," particularly her state visit to the United States.

He described the visit as "a high-water mark," and as "very effective and positive."

Condescension

Villar, chair of the Senate committee on foreign relations, said the Philippines should defend itself from negative comments such as Takano's and not allow prosperous countries like Japan to take a condescending attitude.

"Takano has two options. If he can't sleep here, he should take sleeping pills, or he can return to Japan so he can sleep there," Villar told reporters.

Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr. said in a text message that "diplomats have rules to live by," and that it was up to Foreign Secretary Blas Ople to decide on what to do with Takano.

But he noted that "rich nations are using the Philippines as punching bag for valid frustrations over bad law and order, corruption in government, and other maladies."

Sen. Rodolfo Biazon acknowledged that Takano's remarks were "undiplomatic," but said he would leave the matter for the DFA to "consider."

"The sensitivity of the relationship between the Philippines and Japan should be a factor and should be considered relative to whatever the Philippine government may do in response to this incident," he said.

Biazon also cautioned government officials like Tourism Secretary Richard Gordon against speculating on the reasons behind Takano's statements.

He recounted hearing Gordon say on radio that Takano said what he did because Japan was envious of the way the United States treated the President during her state visit.

Gordon reportedly also said this was the ambassador's way of getting Manila to fast-track providing counterpart funds for Japanese projects here.

'Very un-Japanese'

In a phone interview, Gordon said Takano's remarks, if sanctioned by Tokyo, were part of the "rumble and tumble" of diplomacy, especially with the President's scheduled working visit to Japan.

"Japan has interests which they want us to notice," Gordon said. "If the ambassador was speaking for his country, then it would seem that he wanted to contribute to the results of the state visit, to try to get us into a position in which we would succumb to their wishes when the President goes to Japan."

Gordon described Takano's comments as "very un-Japanese."

He said the comments, although "laudable" for tackling the concerns of the Japanese in the country, were made at a wrong time and "tainted" the image of the Philippines.

"The envoy could have saved himself a lot of sleepless nights if he [made] the comments at some other time, not before the President's visit to Japan and not after her successful visit in the United States," Gordon said. *With reports from Christine O. Avendaño and Jerome Aning*

GMA: MILF truce tactical ploy, ruse

From page A1

Despite the truce offer, however, MILF guerrillas the other day raided three southern villages, burning houses and leaving five civilians and five of their comrades dead. The attack angered the President.

No conditions

One of two senators from Mindanao, opposition leader Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr., urged both the government and the MILF to pursue the ceasefire without conditions.

In a statement, Pimentel warned that attaching conditions to a possible truce "could only ruin the atmosphere for reviving the stalled peace negotiations, especially if either or both sides are not yet in a position to comply with certain demands."

If the government has demands, Pimentel said, it should take these up at the negotiating table.

The President had set three conditions for the MILF: renounce terrorism and its ties to terrorist groups; disclose rebel positions, and surrender those behind the spate of bombings in the South.

The President set the conditions a few hours after the MILF attacked two Army camps in North Cotabato the other day.

But another senator, a former Armed Forces chief of staff, said the government should "not to be taken in (by) the ruse" of the MILF.

"I doubt the sincerity of that announcement and this was proven by this latest attack of the MILF," Sen. Rodolfo Biazon told reporters.

Biazon said that the MILF merely "dangled" the ceasefire proposal because it was "put in a corner," given the ongoing military offensives in several Mindanao provinces.

But Biazon said he was for the resumption of peace talks between the two sides without conditions.

Sen. Ramon Magsaysay Jr., chair of the Senate committee on national defense, said that the new MILF offensive only meant that "some elements in the rebel group can't be controlled by the leadership."

But in his statement, Quevedo asked the government to "reciprocate" the MILF's offer.

LITTLE girl at the Buisan evacaution center in Pikit, North Cotabato, who's close to tears because food had run out before she could get her share, could be going home soon as the MILF, according to Catholic leaders, had guaranteed safe passage for the evacuees. EDWIN BACASMAS

Bishops' optimism

He raised optimism that the ceasefire will lead to a "progression of events . . . toward the safe return of the evacuees and the resumption of peace talks."

"It is also hoped that the government would reciprocate," he said of the MILF's ceasefire declaration.

Quevedo said the MILF gave its assurance in a letter to him last May 9. The MILF also expressed its wish to return to the negotiating table.

"We remain determined to exhaust all possible means in order not to be lured into engaging in 'violent acts' or immediate 'retaliatory attacks'; we shall continue to be patient and restrain ourselves for as long as and as much as possible," he quoted the MILF leadership as saying.

Quevedo said it was now clear that both sides are "open to the return and rehabilitation of internally displaced persons" and the policy of maintaining "zones of peace" or "sanctuaries of peace."

He assured both parties that church leaders have been closely working with government leaders and officers of Tabang Mindanaw, the Citizens' Council for Peace and Mothers of Peace to expand the zones of peace.

"This will require negotiations with local commanders at ground level. The process is evolving quickly," he said of the move to quickly establish the zones of peace in conflict areas in Mindanao.

In Malacañang, Bunye said it was hard to believe the MILF "excuse" that some MILF rebels had not heard of the truce offer, since the MILF is closely monitoring the radio.

"We welcome peace under conditions of sincerity and justice. We will not accept peace with deception and we will not (give up) our ground amid constant threats to our people," the President said.

"We have to see something more convincing than empty peace overtures on the part of the MILF," she said. *With reports from Martin Marfil; AFP*

Peace groups appeal to GMA for ceasefire

DAVAO CITY—Mindanao-based peace groups yesterday joined the unilateral ceasefire bandwagon, issuing an appeal to the President reciprocate the MILF offer.

The groups asked President Macapagal-Arroyo to declare a ceasefire equal to or longer than the 10-day truce declared by the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) on Wednesday.

They said the MILF's unilateral declaration might just pave the way for a lasting peace in troubled parts of Mindanao.

"Any step from wherever that can lead to peace deserves our support. Hence we welcome the unilateral declaration today of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front for a 10-day Suspension of Offensive Military Actions throughout Mindanao and Sulu," the peace groups said in a statemen

The signatories include the Agong Network, Civil Society Organizations Forum, Consortium of Bangsamoro Civil Society, Mindanao Peace Advocates Conference, Mindanao People's Caucus, Mindanao Peoples Peace Movement and Peace Advocates Zamboanga.

"The ceasefire declaration is a glimmer of hope in the climate of war and escalating violence that envelops many parts of Mindanao," they said.

They also urged the government to immediately appoint a chair for the GRP peace panel, preferably a civilian from Mindanao, and "grant the chair adequate mandate and powers to pursue the peace process and negotiate for a just political settlement."

In Pikit, North Cotabato, residents displaced by armed encounters since February hailed the truce offer.

"We are happy with this development because it implies that we can finally go home," 17-year old Muslima Mama said.

But Mama, whose family came from Barangay Kabasalan, said it would be better if the ceasefire became permanent.

Mama, who was able to talk to Ms Macapagal in Malacañang last April, said the President should keep her promises.

"We asked for ceasefire and she said she will work for it. She said troops will be repositioned and that we will be given livelihood projects and our places will be rehabilitated," Mama said. *Jeffrey M. Tupas, Grace Cantal-Albasin, Lullie Micabalo, Jeffrey P. Maningo, Julie S. Alipala and Joselle R. Badilla, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

'If economy remains good, GMA should run'

From page A1

dling of the economy because she was focused on their concerns, such as the peace and order situation.

Jose L. Cuisia, Philamlife group chair and former governor of the Central Bank, said Ms Macapagal should make her final decision only during the campaign season, when all those in the running had formalized their candidacies.

"It all depends on the choices that the voters have during the election," Cuisia said. "I think the President's entry will only broaden the voters' choice."

During Ms Macapagal's state visit to the United States, a number of American businessmen were interested to know whether she would seek a second term, Cuisia said.

"I could not confirm anything because I don't know," he said.

He noted that the only drawback to the President's becoming a candidate in 2004 would be a loss of credibility in view of her repeated statements that she would not run.

But at her briefing yesterday for business groups at the Dusit Hotel in Makati City, the President appealed to both her detractors and supporters not to taint her recent state visit with political color.

"Do not misappropriate the gains of my state visit in favor of whatever they may imagine to be my political plans in 2004," she said.

No laundry list

The President said she had decided not to present a "laundry list" of these gains. The beneficiaries, she said, would be the best spokespersons to validate the reality of the concessions.

But she announced that the state visit generated at least $3.35 billion in investments, trade concessions and financial aid.

The figure is broken down thus: over $1 billion in investments and job contracts; over $1 billion worth of projects bankrolled by the World Bank and International Finance Corp.; $500 million in new credit lines from the Overseas Private Investment Corp.; defense and security assistance worth $350 million; $300 million in savings from overseas foreign workers remittances; and over $200 million in poverty alleviation programs.

"The magnitude, range and structure of the benefits we obtained merited our country's appreciation," Ms Macapagal said. "We obtained quantitatively more valuable benefits across a wider range of concerns at a more accelerated schedule, and with better targeted purposes than we had thought attainable at these times."

In his terse introduction, Trade Secretary Manuel Roxas II dubbed the speaker as "the President of a confident and resurgent Philippines."

Ms Macapagal returned the compliment by recalling US President George W. Bush's statement when Roxas passed the reception line at the White House state dinner— "You are a great heir of a great political tradition."

She stressed that money was not central to the long-term relationship of the Philippines and the United States.

"The purpose of the trip was not about aid but about a new and broadened relationship that takes in every facet of life and commerce between the two nations," she said.

Changed relationship

The President expressed confidence that Philippine-US ties had changed significantly and had become a relationship based on "trade, and not aid; reciprocity, not mendicancy; mutuality, not exclusivity."

She also underscored the fact that she was the first Asian head of state to be granted a state visit by the Bush presidency.

After her speech, Ms Macapagal stayed for lunch with the businessmen and gamely posed for souvenir photographs.

Redeployment . . .

From page A1

troops would again be based in the Philippines.

"We are always reassessing the structure and forward deployment of the structures in light of what happened two years ago," said Hagel, the Republican chair of the US Senate's foreign relations committee, referring to the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.

"I am not aware of any decisions made about any permanent basing in the Philippines and anywhere else. But certainly we have to constantly assess our force structure and redeployment of that structure," Hagel said.

Reed, a Democrat and a member of the armed services committee, agreed with Hagel.

"The scale of our fighting forces is being reevaluated not just here in Asia but also in Europe."

"So this is a constant process, but there have been no firm plans to decide to go to any country or another," Reed said.

Instead of basing, Reed said there should be more cooperation among governments in the Asia-Pacific region.

"First, on intelligence sharing and second, (on) increasing the skill of our fighting forces of the country's and this part of the world so that collaboration is probably the most important thing we can do at the moment," Reed added.

Not final decision

A Pentagon press officer, reached by an official of Okinawa's regional government, said the United States was in fact considering such a redeployment.

"It is being considered but is not a final decision," the Okinawa official quoted the officer as saying.

The Pentagon press officer reportedly added: "You should carefully read the key words."

The Los Angeles Times said the United States was considering moving "all but about 5,000" of the 20,000 Marines on the main island of Okinawa to new bases that would be established in Australia. Okinawa hosts two-thirds of some 47,000 US troops in Japan.

A US embassy official in Japan told Agence France Presse separately: "As part of global realignment of US forces, there will be changes in Asia."

"We are looking at our current posture in Korea and Japan and have established mechanisms for discussing realignments with these two key allies," the official said, noting: "No final decisions have been made."

The embassy official said the article contained "a number of inaccurate or misleading statements: for example, no plans to place ground troops in the Philippines, base ships in Vietnam, or move most of Okinawa Marines to Australia."

Good meeting

"The story seriously overstates the extent to which decisions have been made about new bases or operational arrangements in Asia," the embassy official said. "Any new arrangements would require careful consultation with the countries involved," the official said.

Hagel and Reed were accompanied by US Ambassador Francis Ricciardone to the Department of Foreign Affairs yesterday following their meeting with President Macapagal-Arroyo in Malacañang.

"We had a very good meeting with the President about mutual interests, security interest and—very high on the agenda—economic interests," Hagel said.

Ricciardone said the President's support for the United States in recent international crises has strengthened the "partnership between equals" of the two countries.

"The relationship has fundamentally changed, not just revitalized but brought to maturity. That's the word President Macapagal-Arroyo used," Ricciardone said.

"It's a partnership between equals. Partnership is better and I think that's what the President has accomplished when she visited and I think when US President George W. Bush comes here, he will also take this up with her," Ricciardone added.

Major ally

Hagel said the Philippines has always been a major non-Nato ally of the United States.

"The Philippines is a major non-Nato ally for many, many years. I think the importance of our relationship—the geo-political location of the Philippines for trade, security, all the issues that are so important to our future—intersects," Hagel said.

"This is the reason why President Bush is coming this fall," he added.

Hagel said counter-terrorist measures in the country have an impact on US interests around the world.

"What President (Macapagal) Arroyo is doing in regard to dealing with her urgent terrorist threats does have an impact on American security threats around the world," Hagel said.

"That's why we are working through some issues to see how we can support her efforts," he added.

"Given the nature of warfare today, the technology we have and the skill of our fighting forces, the old structure of coast and navy bases has to be reevaluated, is being reevaluated not just here in Asia but also in Europe," Reed told reporters.

In Southeast Asia, the Philippines hosts the most high-profile US military presence, with a few thousand American troops taking turns over the last two years to train the Armed Forces.

At present Washington has six military hubs in the Asia-Pacific region but they are all oriented toward Northeast Asia, where US forces are positioned for a potential conflict in the Korean peninsula.

The US has no permanent military base in Southeast Asia since the closing of its Clark and Subic bases in the Philippines in 1992.

Since the closure of the nearly 100-year-old bases, Washington has been using Singapore as a logistics hub for warships moving from the Pacific Ocean to the Persian Gulf. *With a report from AFP*

Earning only P6,000, frogmen saved 182 lives

From page A1

ing sea trying to rescue passengers of the ill-fated boat.

"It was a job we had sworn to do. It's our job, plain and simple," Godoy said.

The Coast Guard frogmen, together with divers from the Philippine Navy and fishermen who were in the area, spent that day pulling out terrified passengers from the waters.

Their heroism—their job—saved the lives of 182 people.

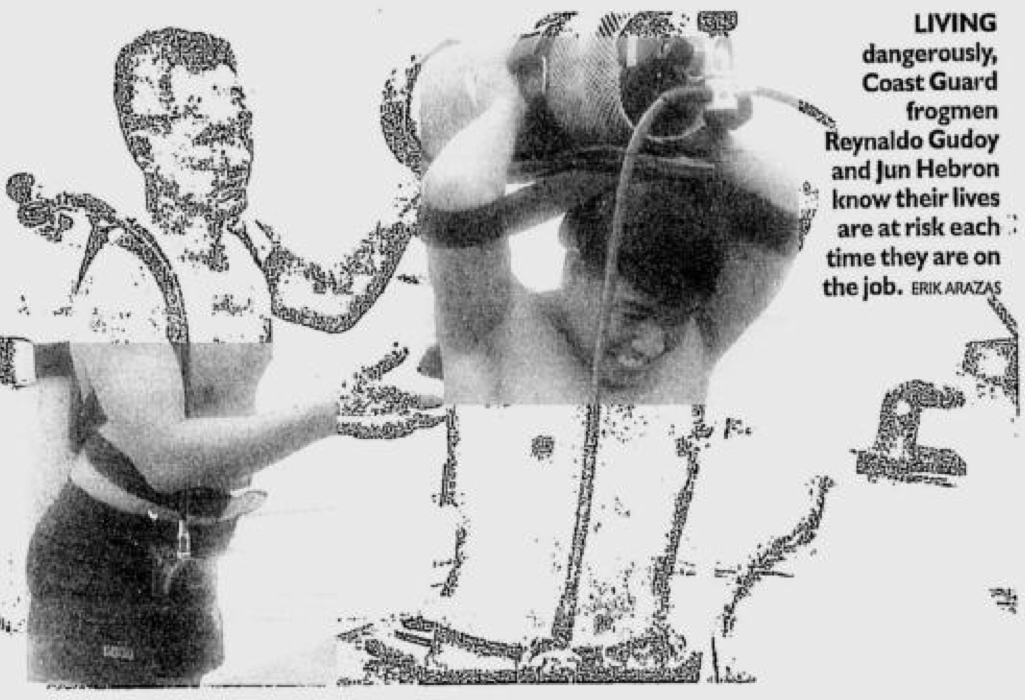
Godoy said they were too busy with their task that most of them forgot to eat.

Finding survivors

Most rewarding for the rescuers was when they found survivors floating at sea.

"It lifted our spirits," Godoy said.

"We don't lose hope. We'll continue searching, until everything is clear," another frogman said.



LIVING dangerously, Coast Guard frogmen Reynaldo Gudoy and Jun Hebron know their lives are at risk each time they are on the job. ERIK ARAZAS

Jun Hebron says that each time they dive, their lives literally hang in the balance.

They know it, have accepted it, and have even learned to joke about it, he said.

Hebron has two children: an 8-year-old girl and a 4-year-old boy. He thinks about them all the time.

"They are always waiting for me," he said. "My wife knows the danger, but she gets used to it. *'Ingat na lang* (Take care).' That's what she says every time we have an operation," Hebron said.

Hebron, a Seaman First Human (S1YN, the equivalent of a private in the Army), earns a basic salary of around P6,000.

Hardest rescue

For frogmen, the hardest rescue operation is when they have to dive for a sunken boat or plane in murky waters.

Hebron, who was part of the rescue team during the crash of LaoagAir Flight 585 last November, recounted in Filipino: "The water was really dark. You couldn't see a thing. That was difficult, even though the weather was fine."

"One mistake, *patay ka* (you're dead)."

Marine inquiry can't finish probe in 5 days

By Luige del Puerto

THE CHAIR of the Board of Marine Inquiry tasked to investigate the sea collision last Sunday that killed at least 31 people admitted yesterday they might not be able to finish the probe in five days, as had been ordered by Transportation Secretary Leandro Mendoza.

This developed after the first day of hearing was marred by lawyers of the MV San Nicolas and Super Ferry 12 who kept badgering each other, considerably slowing down the proceedings.

"With this pace, I don't think we can finish (the probe) in five days," Rear Admiral Domingo Estera told reporters.

The Board has decided to hold hearings even this weekend.

Meanwhile, six bodies—four females and two males—have been recovered on the shores of Cavite, Corregidor and Navotas in the last three days. The latest, that of a male estimated to be 35 to 40 years old, was found in Navotas at 6 a.m. yesterday.

If they are confirmed to be passengers of the San Nicolas, the death toll will rise to 37. According to the official tally by the Philippine Coast Guard, 31 have been confirmed dead, 24 are still missing and 182 others have survived.

The remains of one of those recovered, that of a boy believed to be around 4 years old, was buried yesterday morning at the engineering dock in Corregidor. The body was found on the shore of the fort-island. It was already in an advanced state of decomposition, so officers decided to bury the remains.

Three of the females were recovered in Tanza while the other one was found in Sangley Point.

Lawyers' arguments

Lawyers of the two sea vessels spent the first two hours of the Board of Marine Inquiry hearing asking "clarificatory questions" on the sketch made by Super Ferry 12 skipper Capt. Rene Rafanan.

Arcelio Fetizanan, lawyer of MV San Nicolas, wanted Rafanan to tell the Board at what point the two ships collided.

Super Ferry lawyer Arthur Lim countered that the question could not be answered because Rafanan did not know the exact speed and course of the other vessel.

They spent some time discussing this issue.

Earlier, Fetizanan cited a "conflict of interest" in Lim's representation of Super Ferry. He said Lim was a former lawyer of MV San Nicolas and had represented the company in at least one case.

'No risk'

Rafanan told the hearing he saw no need to change course when he saw the San Nicolas on radar five miles away.

"There was no risk. In my calculation, she was going to get past us at five cables (0.5 miles) away," Rafanan said.

He maintained that based on his experience, five cables was enough "sea room" for two ships.

Rafanan has been captain of the Super Ferry 12 only for three months, but he was a master mariner of international vessels for more than five years.

Under questioning from the Board members, Rafanan admitted he did not consider using the ship's radio when he saw the San Nicolas.

Board members' opinion

But two members of the Board told the INQUIRER that Rafanan should have altered his course immediately when the San Nicolas showed up on radar.

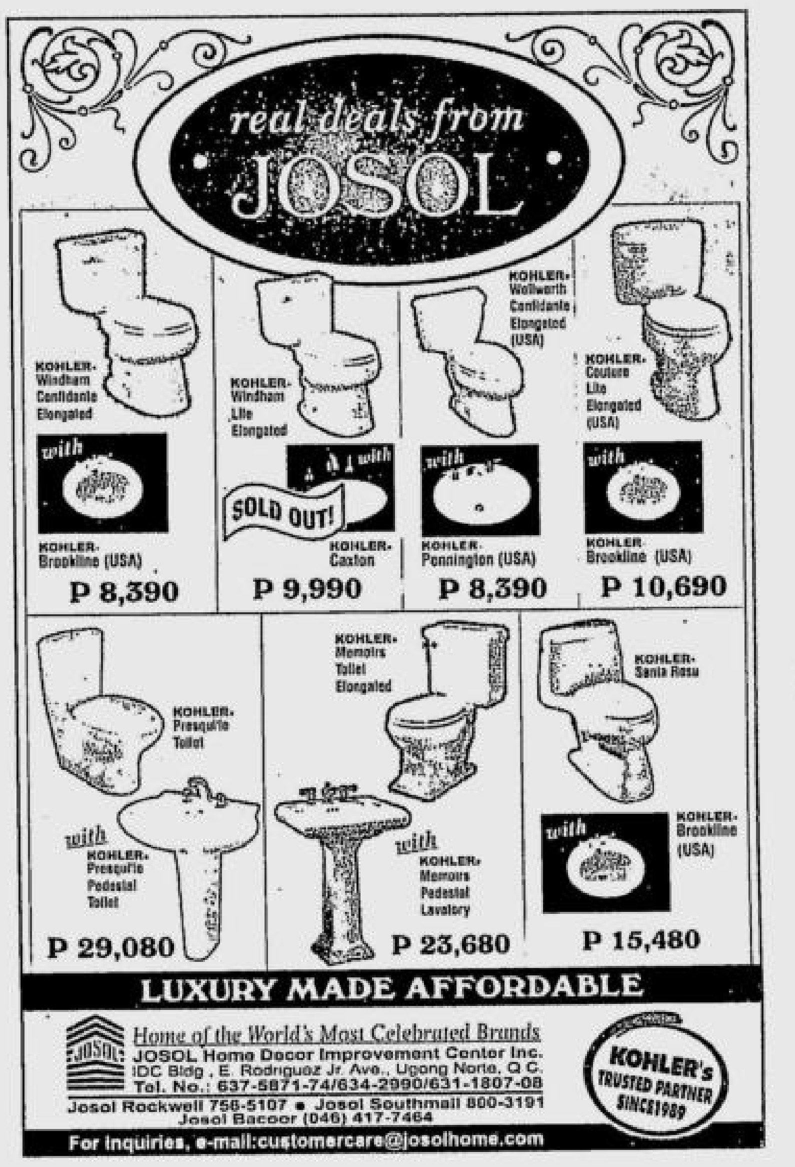
"Given the conditions at sea, the poor visibility, and the size of his ship, he should have altered his course immediately to give them enough sea room," Capt. Gregorio M. Sialsa said.

Sialsa said Rafanan should also have used the ship's horn when he changed the ship's direction.

Capt. Danilo Venida agreed.

"I grew up in the international trading industry. We have a different standard there, but given the size of his ship, I am not comfortable with just five cables of CPA (closest point of approach)," he said.

Venida also chided the Super Ferry captain for not making use of his radio when it could have come in handy.



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THE SLEEP OF THE HOMELESS

The aftermath of Chedeng leaves more evacuees needing food, clothing and shelter. These ones are at the Malanday Elementary School in Marikina where they were housed after the creek beside their homes overflowed to dangerous levels. *(Story on Page A2)*

JOAN BONDOC

Kiko, Sharon to honeymoon . . .

From page A1

"All I can say is that it is untrue and baseless and I would prefer not to comment further on what I believe is a non-issue," the senator said.

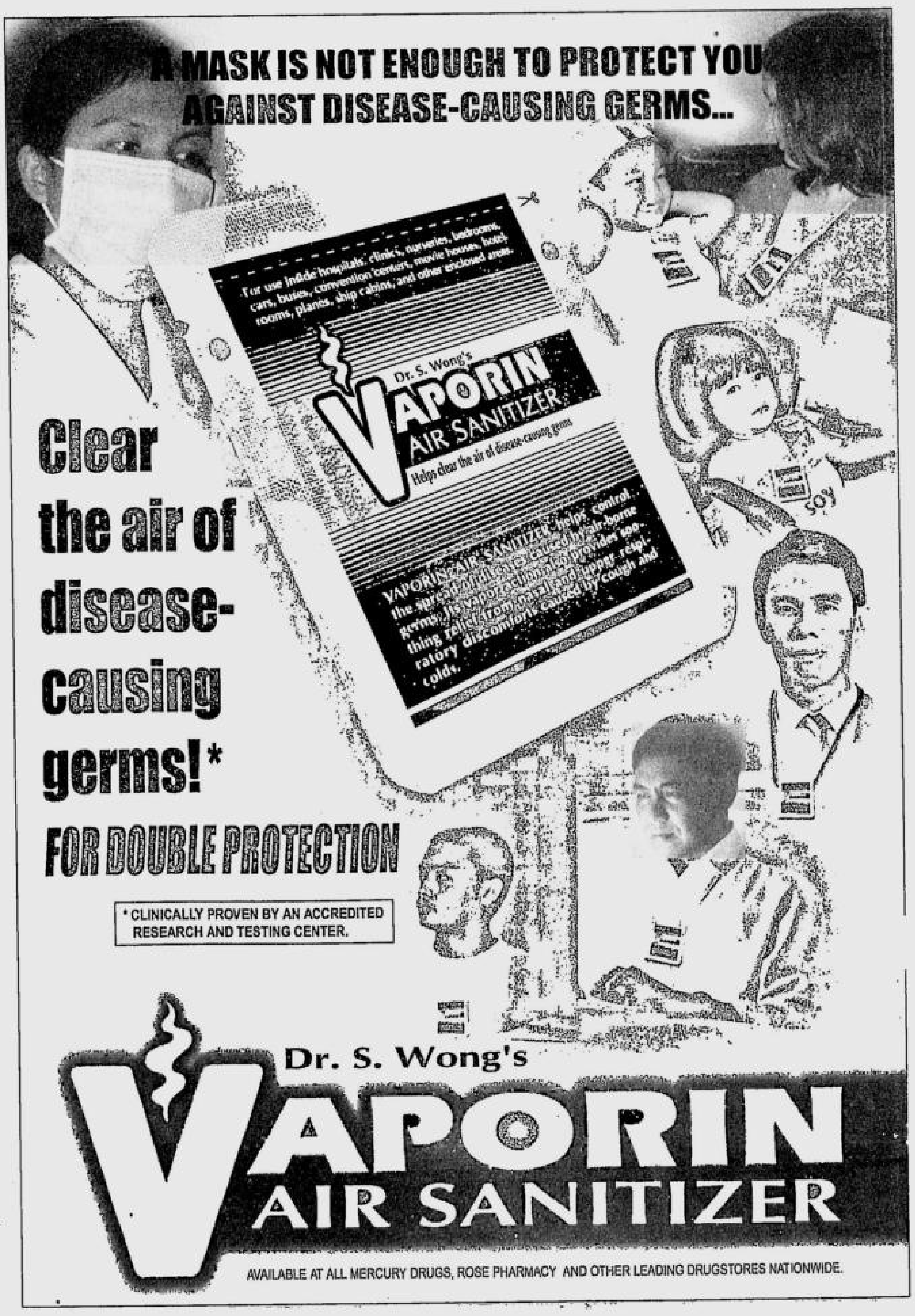
"That being the case and given the serious problems of our country, there are more important matters for the media to focus on."

Asked whether he agrees with Cuneta's statement to the INQUIRER on Thursday that the rumors were politically motivated, he said: "(This) could very well be considering these rumors never cropped up before I entered politics."

"H'wag na natin palakihin dahil hindi naman totoo (Let's not make a lie any bigger)," he pleaded.

As though to stress that all is well in the homefront, Pangilinan said that he and Cuneta are going on a "second honeymoon" to the United States next month to attend the 5th annual homecoming of the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University in Boston where he took his masters in public administration in 1998.

Cuneta had also denied that she left her husband but admitted she she and her daughter KC, stayed overnight last Monday in the residence of her aunt Helen Gamboa and uncle Sen. Vicente Sotto to have a girls' night out with her cousins.



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By Tina Santos
and Tonette Orejas,
PDI Central Luzon Desk

THE DREAM of owning houses, which some 2,500 urban poor families in Malabon City have been nurturing, appears to have dimmed after the North Luzon Railways Corporation proposed the cancellation of their relocation site—a 12.5-hectare property in Tanza, Navotas.

Sources claimed that the site, which the Malabon City government suggested to North Luzon Railways, still has to be reclaimed from the sea.

According to Jerry L. Pelayo, director of Northrail, the agency has already approved a board resolution saying the proposed site, which used to be a fishpond, may not be suitable for relocation purposes based on the assessment of the National Housing Authority.

"It remains underwater, it has no right of way," Pelayo said in an interview. "Perhaps it would take more than two years before they would be able to fill up the entire property, and we cannot wait that long."

He said the shanties of the informal settlers need to be demolished by the end of July due to the tight schedule of the Northrail Project construction.

"We don't want to loose the momentum of the project, we don't want our work to be interrupted," he said.

The Northrail director added that the board resolution is already final and they have already informed President Gloria Arroyo of the status of the resettlement site.

The Manila-Clark Rapid Railway System project will affect 17,500 families living along the old Philippine National Railway tracks in Bulacan.

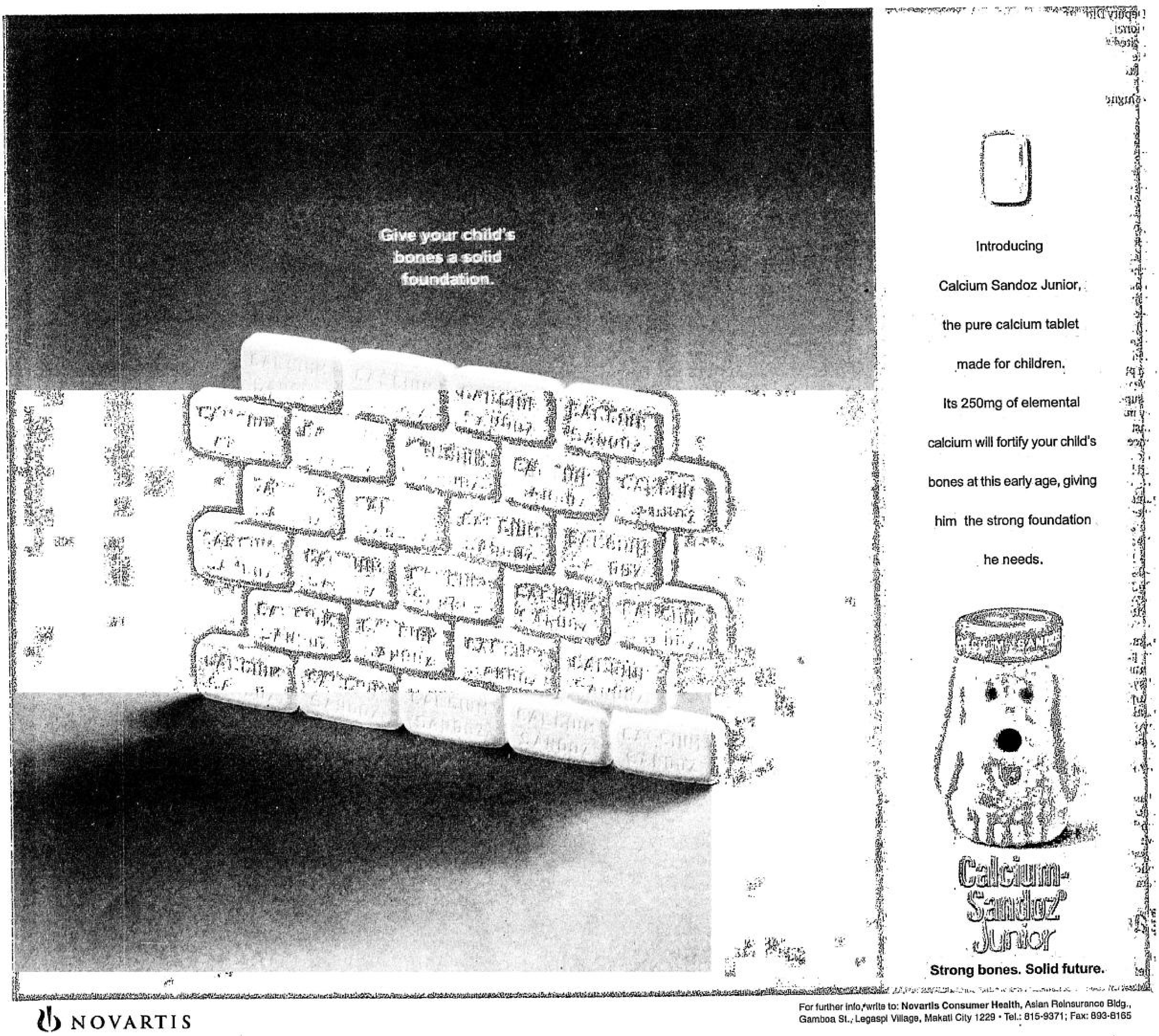
Housing Secretary Michael Defensor said that they hoped to relocate these families to suitable sites by June 2004.

Defensor also expects to transfer 15,000 more families in Pampanga starting late next year.

The government has already cleared the Malabon and Valenzuela PNR tracks of some 6,000 squatters, he said.

The P4-billion relocation plan, which groups of urban poor families had come to refer to as "massive dislocation," was a major requirement of foreign funding partners of the government for the Metro-Clark railway project.

Defensor said the HUDCC provided each family a relocation package worth P185,000.



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HOT BIKES
CUSTOMS officials seize five BMW motorcycles, each worth at least P5 million, at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport. Customs officials said the consigners have grossly undervalued the worth of the motorcycles.
ROGER MARGALLO

One-armed assassin strikes in Parañaque

By Leila Salaverria and Alcuin Papa

THE MANAGER of a security agency in Parañaque City survived an attempt on his life on Thursday by a one-armed man who shot him four times, police said.

Manuel Garcia, 53, whom police said is a close associate of Parañaque Rep. Eduardo Zialcita, is now undergoing treatment for gunshot wounds at the San Juan de Dios Hospital, police said. He is a manager of Maxi Security Agency.

The suspect, whose right arm is missing, was identified only as Putol (Amputee). He is said to be a former member of the New People's Army.

Probers are looking into the possibility that the attempt on Garcia could be related to a dispute involving the collection of fees by the guards of Maxi Security Agency for the use of a road in Multinational Village. The agency used to be employed by the village, but its contract ended this week.

Investigation showed that Putol had gone to Garcia's home-office in Moonwalk Village on Thursday to ask for rice, which Garcia is known to give to his neighbors.

Putol was accompanied by Cesar Mina and Ricky and June Salpiga.

Police said that when Putol entered Garcia's house, his companions overpowered guard Bernie Abarro and took his 9mm service firearm.

Four shots were fired while Abarro was struggling with the suspects who ran off, but June Salpiga was nabbed by police chief Supt. Roland Estilles when he returned the 9mm firearm to the security guard.

Estilles filed frustrated murder charges against the suspect. Police are now hunting down the three other suspects.

In Quezon City, security guard Mario Panaga, 36, of Barangay Sto. Domingo, yesterday shot dead family driver Ruben Vinas, 45, also of Barangay Sto. Domingo, over a grudge, police said.

Barangay officials arrested Panaga during follow-up operations.

Witnesses told police that a drunken Vinas had picked on Panaga a few days ago, resulting into a confrontation.

But Vinas yesterday visited Panaga to settle their misunderstanding. When Panaga refused his overtures, Vinas punched him in the face. Panaga left, but returned with a shotgun and shot Vinas, who died instantaneously.

Car thief slain, 3 lawmen hurt ...

From page A23

two other cohorts as Orlando Gapat and Andrew Jimenez.

Ramos said the three policemen, along with PO2 Joel Ortega, were manning a checkpoint at the corner of Lapu-Lapu and Pampano streets at about 9:30 p.m. Thursday when they saw a tricycle approaching with five men on board.

Ramos said Napa signaled tricycle driver Darwin Sacdalan, 25, to stop. When three of the policemen approached the tricycle, the four passengers, who were all wearing black long-sleeved "Bantay Bayan" shirts, drew their guns and started firing.

Napa fell in the first volley. Casungcad and Alvarez managed to trade shots with the suspects who fled on the tricycle. When the smoke cleared, the lawmen saw the lone suspect lying dead on the ground.

Police recovered a .45-caliber pistol and a small bottle with a Latin inscription filled with oil, which the fallen apparently used as an amulet.

Sacdalan later told police that the four suspects held him at gunpoint and ordered him to drive past the checkpoint.

Deputy Director General Reynaldo Velasco, National Capital Region Police Office chief, has cited the four policemen for bravery.

He said the policemen will be awarded with the Medalya ng Sugatang Magiting and will all be considered for promotion to the next higher rank.

BFP official rapped for approving QC fire inspections

By Agnes Donato

AN OFFICIAL of the Bureau of Fire and Protection was yesterday charged before the Quezon City Prosecutor's Office for allegedly approving fire safety inspection certificates even when he no longer had the authority to do so.

Senior Insp. Samuel Tadeo, former chief of the Quezon City Fire Department's Fire Safety Unit was accused of usurpation of official function—a violation of Article 177 of the Revised Penal Code.

Tadeo is now head of the Intelligence Investigation Unit of the National Capital Region Fire Department II.

The charge stemmed from a complaint filed by Inspector Virgilio Acatal, who replaced Tadeo in the Quezon City Fire Department.

Acatal had claimed that "without any authority, Tadeo processed, recommended and affixed his signature in a number of fire safety inspection certificates recommending the approval of said certificates to the City Fire Marshall."

Acatal said Tadeo, who was relieved from his former post on May 27, 2002, continued serving this function from June to August 2002.

The complainant assumed Tadeo's position on May 30.

QC flood-prone areas drop ...

From page A23

portions of A. Bonifacio Avenue, Del Monte Avenue, Araneta Avenue, North West Avenue Junction and C-3.

In the second district, eight areas, including Commonwealth avenue, Quirino Highway and Tandang Sora Avenue, have been identified as vulnerable to flooding. In the third district, flooding is expected in 13 areas, which include some sections of Kalayaan Avenue, Elliptical Road, East Avenue, V. Luna Road, P. Tuazon Street and Aurora Boulevard.

In the fourth district, 11 areas are considered prone to floods. Among these are certain side streets along Timog Avenue, Quezon Avenue, E. Rodriguez Avenue and Tomas Morato Street.

MMDA: Katipunan project has GMA's nod

From page A23

area, do not see the need to widen Katipunan Avenue to solve the traffic problem there, and to fell the trees for the purpose.

"Leave the trees alone," was their rallying cry yesterday when they assembled at 9:30 a.m. at the parking lot of Barangay Loyola.

Carrying banners with similar messages written on them, about 40 protesters formed a straight line blocking Katipunan Avenue for about 30 seconds before proceeding to a partly-demolished island in front of Ateneo.

"Cutting down the trees is not the solution to the worsening traffic congestion," said Dr. Teresita Perez, of the Ateneo de Manila University. "These trees are beneficial for us ... as they absorb the pollutants and, in turn, give us fresh air to breathe."

But Fernando said faster traffic flow would actually be good for the environment.

"The best solution (to clean up the air) is to remove the emission (on the roads)," he said. "If you speed up traffic, vehicles would spend only 15 minutes instead of 30 minutes on the road. When this happens, then there would only be 15 minutes of emission."

He also said the mindset that anyone could plant trees on the roads is wrong.

"Roads are made to make travel faster, and for travel to be faster, obstructions should be removed," he said.

Fernando considered service islands as among such obstructions, including the trees planted on them.

He admitted that there was the possibility that some of the trees that would be balled might not survive. But this was a risk that had to be taken in consideration of public safety, he added.

Fernando said that sometimes trees had to be cut, depending on the situation, like in the case of the impounding area in Pasig where several trees were cut to create space for the vehicles.

"(The removal of the trees) must have a valid purpose," he said.

Running priest Fr. Robert Reyes vowed to "run against Bayani, (Environment Secretary Bibeth) Gozon and GMA" if the trees were not left alone.

"You can pull the concrete, but don't dare touch the trees," he said.

Actress and chair for projects of Mother Earth Unlimited Chin-Chin Gutierrez lamented the destruction of the environment in favor of development.

"Why must the casualty of development always be the environment? Why can't we practice sustainable development?"

Fernando wants to finish the project in time for the opening of classes on June 16.

Unfinished business

BARE EYE

Recab Trinidad

THIS is a surprise reappearance. I have no business being here, having allowed this column to be relocated where it actually started—the beloved sports section.

It would however be unfair if I dodge this responsibility of giving way to an urgent request.

Please allow me to tackle this unfinished business.

This is about the misadventures of Seaman Second Class Harly Ranosa who had been accused of sowing terror in his neighborhood in Rawis, Legazpi City.

The complaint against the navy man, published in this column in November 1999, had been properly acted upon by authorities.

We will no longer detail the action taken by his superiors on the complaint against the navy man.

Instead, we will print his plea to be given a chance to clear his name.

He said he and his family had been devastated by the accusations.

He said he was innocent of all the charges against him.

Please read what he had to say in the vernacular:

Ngayon lang po ako nagkaroon ng lakas ng loob na lumiham sa inyo, matapos akong payuhan ng aking bayaw. Lubos po akong naapektuhan hangang sa kasulukuyan ng inyong column na "Who'll stop this Rambo in the Navy?" nuong Noviembre 1999. Halos mawasak po ang aking pagkatao. Wala pong katotohanan ang mga paratang nila. Wala po akong record sa aming barangay at sa himpilan ng pulisya. Lahat po ay paninira lamang.

Lumiham po ako sa inyo upang linisin ang aking pangalan, at nawa ay mailathala ninyo ito. Makapagpapatunay po ang aming barangay at ang mga lihitimong tagarito.

HARLY RANOSA

***

This second topic, a plea by a mother to proper authorities, can be classified as another unfinished business.

Mrs. A. Irene Meneses de los Reyes of Maysantol, Bulacan, Bulacan wants to make public what she considers "a forgotten case of veterans and their families."

Mrs. De los Reyes prays that the government would look their way, and the best we can do is reprint this letter she had sent to Executive Secretary Alberto Romulo last year. Here:

Dear Sec. Romulo,

We, the surviving spouses of veterans and our families who have immensely benefited from the "Old Age Pension Bill" you authored into law are forever grateful to you as our compassionate champion.

We believe, sir, that you will continue to help us, more so now as executive secretary to President Gloria-Macapagal Arroyo regarding the unacted "Senate Bill 1532" left pending in the 10th Congress which you authored and filed in 1996 upon my proposal.

In the 11th Congress, I wrote a letter to Sen. Rodolfo Biazon pleading to re-file your Senate Bill 1532 while appealing for his compassion being a soldier himself. I received a second letter signed by Sen. Biazon himself promising to include the amendment of "RA 340 section 3" in a bill he said he would file regarding the compensation of military personnel and he promised to send us a copy which I never received. I wrote him twice inquiring about his promise but I never received a reply from Sen. Biazon anymore.

Would it be possible, sir, that what you left pending in the 10th Congress, and ignored by Sen. Biazon, be brought to the attention of President Arroyo because we believe that, as a woman herself, she will have pity on us who could benefit if she would amend RA 340 by Presidential decree. We love President Gloria but she will endear herself to fellow women and their families if RA 340 will be amended before the 2004 elections.

Please help us with the President.

MRS. A. IRENE MENESES DE LOS REYES

'Jack lives here' goes on tonight

THE "JACK LIVES HERE" jam session of Jack Daniel's in Eastwood City in Libis, Quezon City will be staged tonight, not last night as earlier reported.

The show features performances by top bands and acoustic singers.

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Napolcom to probe mulcting lawmen

By TJ Burgonio and Margaux Ortiz

"WE DON'T tolerate the shenanigans of our men in uniform, and never will we allow them to continue with their criminal acts."

Local Government Secretary Joey Lina yesterday issued this warning and ordered the National Police Commission to look into the allegations of extortion which a Manila bar owner hurled against three members of the national police's Criminal Investigation and Detection Group.

Lina, who also chairs the Napolcom, yesterday ordered his vice-chair Linda Hornilla to investigate bar owner Enrico Espinosa's allegations against PO2 Larry Javier, PO2 Roberto Chua and PO2 Bayani Nery.

But the lawmen yesterday denied they took P200,000 in "goodwill money" from Espinosa.

"We never extorted a single cent," the accused lawmen said. "We never even saw Espinosa."

Chua said that they even conducted surveillance on Espinosa's Eros Bar & Restaurant on Adriatico Street in Malate, before they raided the joint.

"The raid was a legal operation," Chua told the INQUIRER. "Espinosa's bar was deliberately violating the law prohibiting nude shows."

The bar closed down after it was raided on May 23.

Espinosa had filed charges against the three CIDG men for extorting P200,000 from him over the past four months.

CIDG Director Eduardo Matillano yesterday urged Espinosa to lodge a formal complaint against the three agents with the agency in Camp Crame so his charges could be investigated.

"If there is evidence, they can be charged administratively and criminally," Matillano said in a phone interview.

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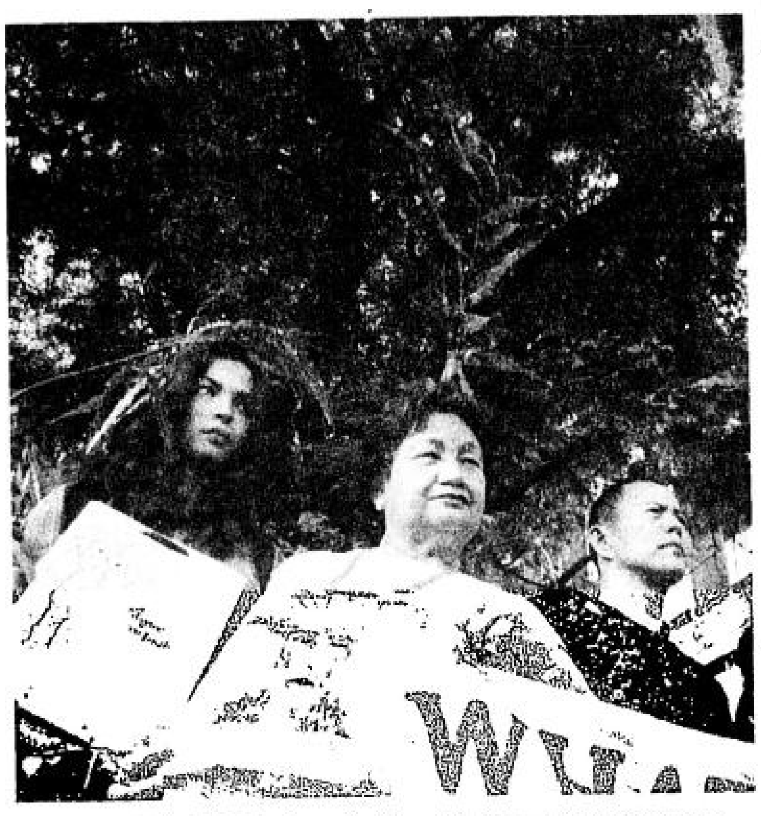
Editor **Abelardo S. Ulanday**

MMDA: Tree-clearing effort has GMA nod



ACTRESS Chin-Chin Gutierez (left) and Fr. Robert Reyes (extreme right) join other protesters as they fight to save the trees lining Katipunan Avenue in Quezon City. JOAN BONDOC

By Leila Salaverria, Amy Remo and Alcuin Papa

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo sees the need to complete the road widening project of Katipunan Avenue in Quezon City, which would mean the cutting of trees planted on islands in the middle of the thoroughfare, according to Metro Manila Development Authority Chair Bayani Fernando.

The MMDA chair, who is under fire from various environmental groups and some senators opposing the tree-cutting, yesterday said he had already spoken with the President about the project and she went along with it.

Ms Macapagal is a resident of La Vista subdivision along Katipunan Avenue.

But Katipunan residents, as well as members of environment groups and socio-civic clubs, and students and professors of various universities and schools in the

MMDA/ A21

QC flood-prone areas drop from 285 to 39

By Agnes Donato

QUEZON City Vice Mayor Herbert Bautista yesterday said that flooding in the city had been reduced by 86 percent.

He said that only 39 low-lying areas in the city were expected to flood by authorities compared to 285 areas which went underwater last year.

Bautista attributed the decrease in flood-prone areas to the city government's "sound anti-flood program, along with the significant progress in the flood control efforts of the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority."

He recalled that since last year, the city government had effected mitigating measures, such as dredging of the creeks and waterways, and clearing of flood pumping stations, canals and drainage system of obstructions and rubbish.

In the city's first district, authorities identified only seven places as flood-prone areas, as compared to last year's 70. These include

QC/A21

Car thief slain, 3 lawmen hurt in Malabon gunfight

By Tina Santos

A SUSPECTED car thief, who disguised himself as a Bantay Bayan member, was killed while three policemen were wounded during a shootout at a checkpoint in Malabon City Thursday night.

Supt. Pete Ramos, Malabon Police chief, identified the wounded policemen as SPO4 Rey Napa, SPO1 Lyndell Casungcad and PO1 Rodolfo Alvarez Jr., all detailed at Precinct 3 in Barangay Longos. The wounded policemen were initially taken to the Pagamutang Bayan ng Malabon and were transferred to the Chinese General Hospital in Manila.

Napa remains in critical condition, Ramos said. He was shot with a .45-caliber pistol in the forehead. Casungcad was shot in the right leg while Alvarez was hit in the left arm, Ramos said.

The dead suspect was identified only through a document found in his wallet. The document contained the name Victor Escaler, 33, of Tondo, Manila.

But Ramos said it could not be immediately confirmed whether the document really belonged to the dead suspect.

Another suspect, Edgardo Nieva, 29, of Camarines Street, Sta. Cruz, Manila, was arrested in Makati yesterday.

During interrogation, Nieva identified his

CAR/ A21

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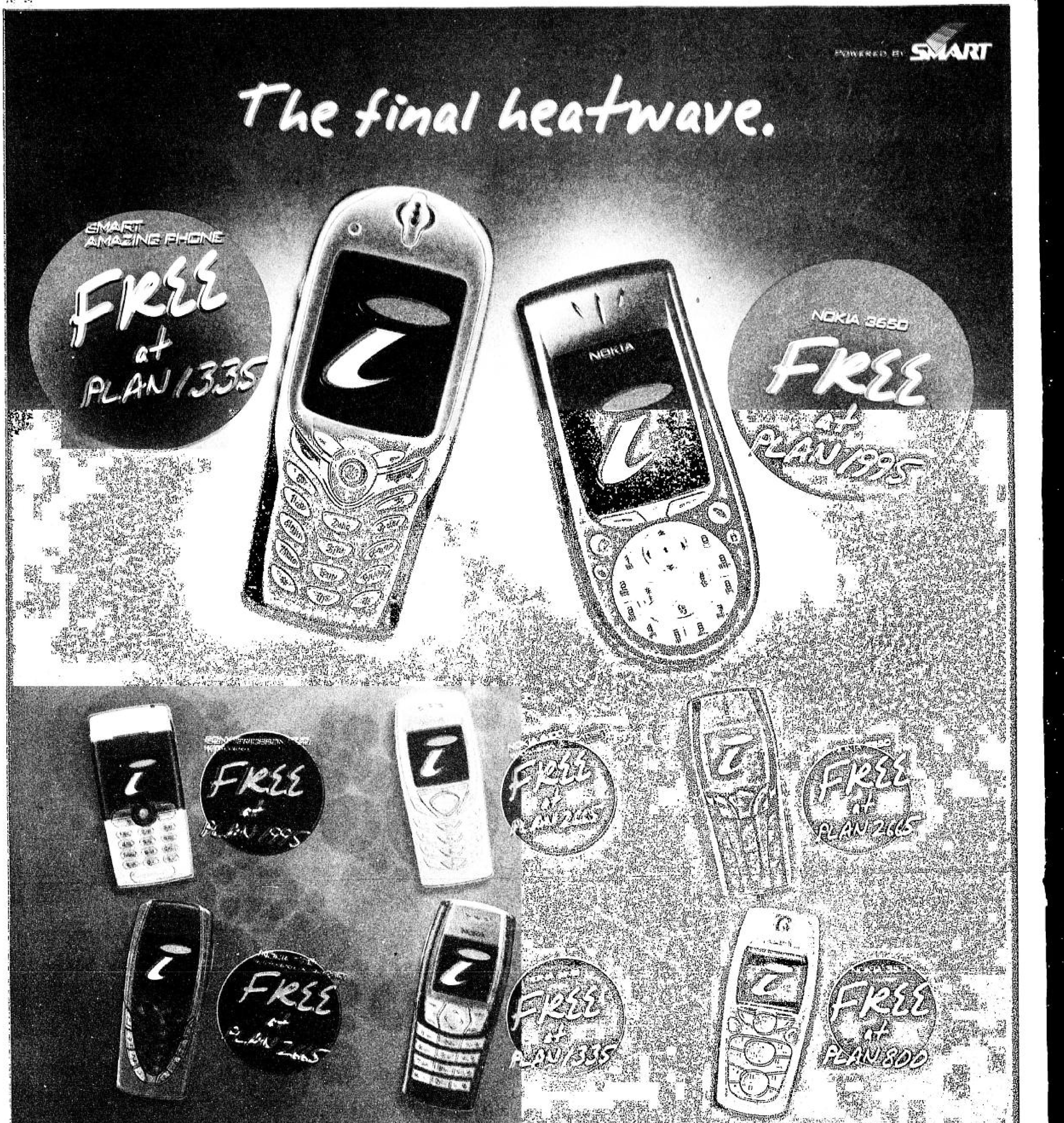

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Harp negative in new drug test

WHAT'S INSIDE

It's Kerr's big night as Spurs enter finals /A28

Voila! French qualifier hits big payday /A30

Tiger stalks Howell in Memorial golf /A30

By June Navarro

AN independent drug test, done by a pathology clinic highly accredited by the Department of Health, yesterday revealed negative results on Davonn Harp's urine samples.

A copy of the result was obtained by the Inquirer yesterday from New World Laboratory on D. Tuazon, Quezon City.

As possible flaws in the PBA drug testing took center stage, Harp of Batang Red Bull demanded an independent retest using new urine samples.

Suspended indefinitely along with five other players after failing in a recent drug test, Harp vowed to seek justice in court if the PBA turns him down.

He said it would all be useless if a retest takes place using the same urine sample which was diagnosed positive for shabu.

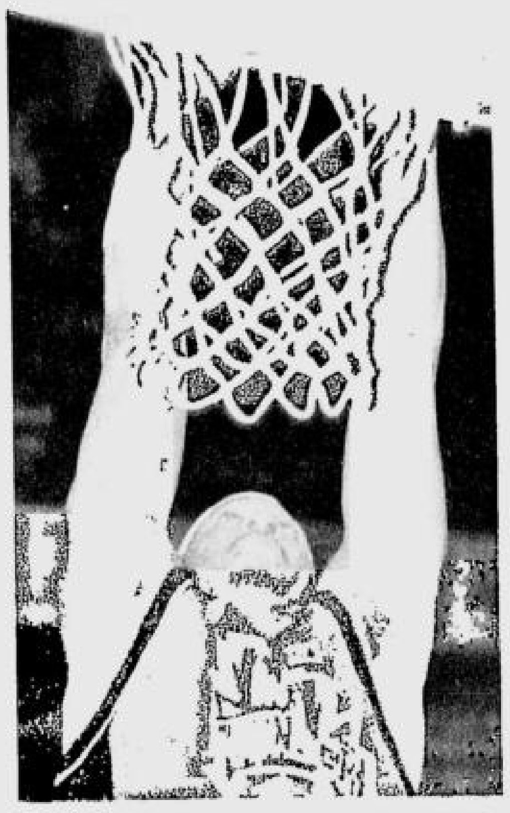
"So I'm appealing for an independent test witnessed by league and Department of Health officials wherein a new urine specimen will be used and not the one which was already submitted to the PBA," said Harp.

PBA Commissioner Noli Eala has given Harp seven days from the start of player's suspension to appeal his case.

The league's reaction to any drug appeal, however, would be to conduct another diagnosis on the same urine sample taken from the player during the mandatory tests.

"I hope the league grants my request because if it doesn't I may have to take some legal steps," said Harp, stressing that doing a Norman Gonzales wouldn't be farfetched.

Gonzales of Talk N Text had threatened to sue the PBA after being declared positive for Ecstasy and being suspended indefinitely almost a month ago.



HARP VAL HANDUMON

"There must be some mistake with the way they handled the urine samples from the manner of collection, identification and transfer from one place to another," said Harp.

He explained that DOH representatives and drug-testing officials failed to seal the urine samples taken from the entire Red Bull team on May 13 and pointed out that a mix-up was highly possible.

Willie Miller, Harp's teammate, confirmed the claim of the 2002 Commissioner's Cup Finals MVP, saying the two vials containing their samples were just dumped carelessly along with the rest of the urine bottles.

A day after Eala slapped indefinite suspensions on Harp, Jun Limpot of Barangay Ginebra, Noli Locsin and Long David of Talk N Text, Ryan Bernardo of FedEx and San Miguel Beer's Dorian Pena, Red Bull management immediately subjected Harp to another urine sample test.

Harp claimed that the medicines he took to cure his nasal problem prior to the mandatory tests could have triggered a positive outcome.

Limpot made the same contention and explained Rhinofront, a drug prescribed by his physician for chronic rhinitis, had caused him to test positive.

Limpot maintained his innocence even as he appealed to Eala for a review of the entire drug testing procedure.

Lawyer Luz Sering, Limpot's first cousin and daughter of former Philippine Olympic president Jose Sering, said there was a serious procedural flaw in the manner the PBA has been conducting drug tests.

"The PBA should have asked the players first what substances they had taken before administering the drug test," Sering said.

She said they have gone to four different hospitals in the metropolis to have Limpot's urine sample tested. All these tests yielded negative results, Sering said.

She said they would also ask the PNP-Crime Laboratory for a detailed breakdown of the drug Rhinofront to further strengthen their claim.

For its part, Red Bull management said it's supporting Harp's request for an independent test after zeroing in on the possible flaws in the PBA method.

Although the Red Bull management said it doesn't question the integrity and professional standards of the test conducted by the DOH and the PNP, it said that several areas of human intervention could have led to the alleged mix-up.

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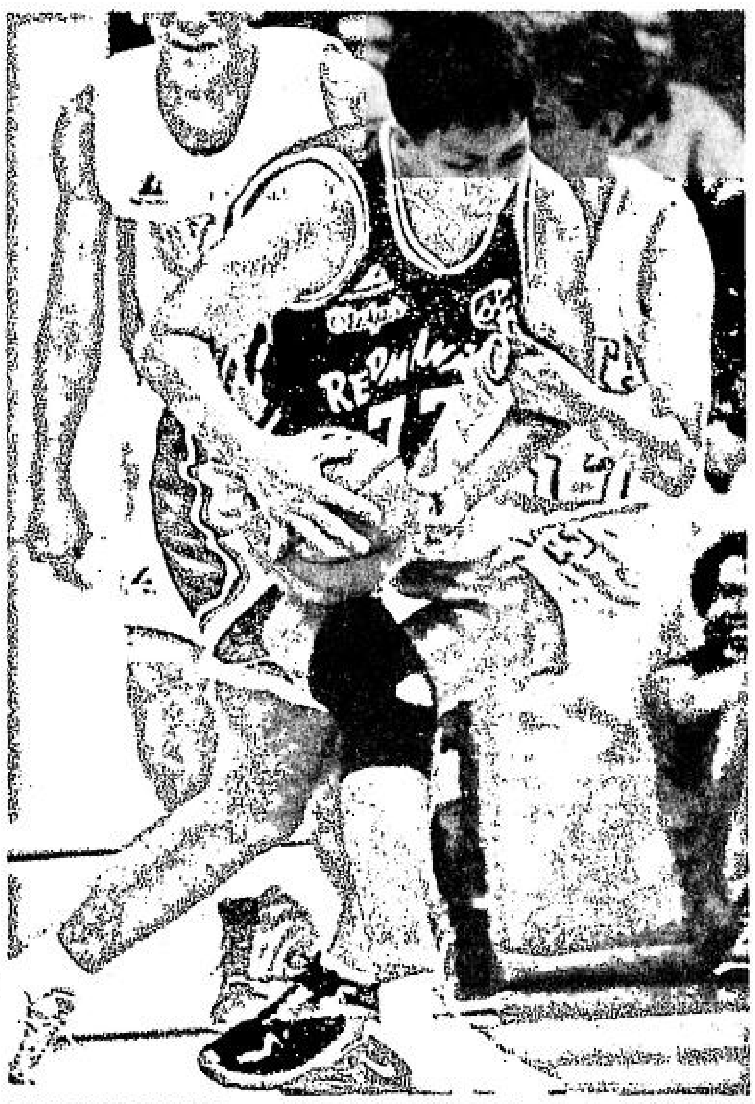
It's Toyota in oldies' reunion



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A lot of hilarious acts also transpired in the slow-moving encounter with Crispa's Atoy Co, Tito Varela and sometimes Guidaben providing comical relief.

The referees, who belong to the same generation, were also the objects of laughter as players from both squads contested many calls and toyed around most of the time.

Meanwhile, Talk N' Text rookie Jimmy Alapag topped the elimination round of the three-point shootout while the duo of Ginebra's Sunday Salvacion and Aris Dimaunahan led the finalists in the two-ball competition during the All-Star side events last night.

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Colorado outscored Los Angeles 25-8 in sweeping their three-game series.

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It was Helton's second career three-homer game.

Scott Elarton (1-1) went the minimum five innings, surrendering eight hits and three runs, to notch the victory.

The victory was Colorado's fifth straight.

Brewers 3 Padres 2

In San Diego, the Milwaukee Brewers did all their scoring with two men gone in their final at-bats, as they rallied to defeat the Padres 3-2.

Eddie Perez's single off hard-luck loser Brian Lawrence (3-6) plated the go-ahead run in the ninth.

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In Philadelphia, Steve Trachsel tossed 6 2/3 shutout innings as the New York Mets blanked the Phillies 5-0.

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Search for new talents in 6 sports launched

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Working under the theme "Medalyang Ginto, May Laban Tayo" the program under the First Gentleman Foundation will also be a partner of the Philippine Sports Commission, the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. and the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes in providing support to the cash-strapped Philippine sports.

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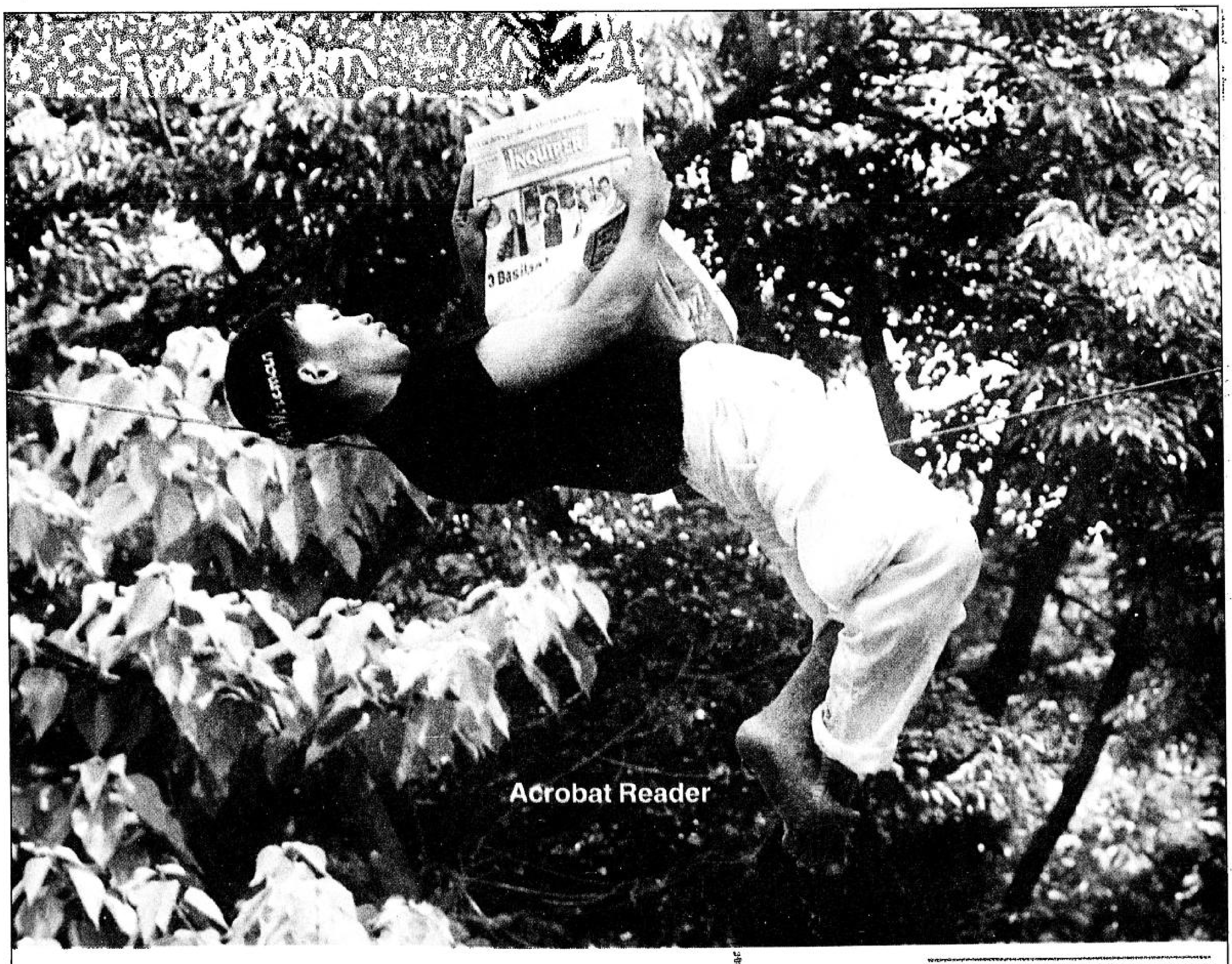

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
News that makes a difference

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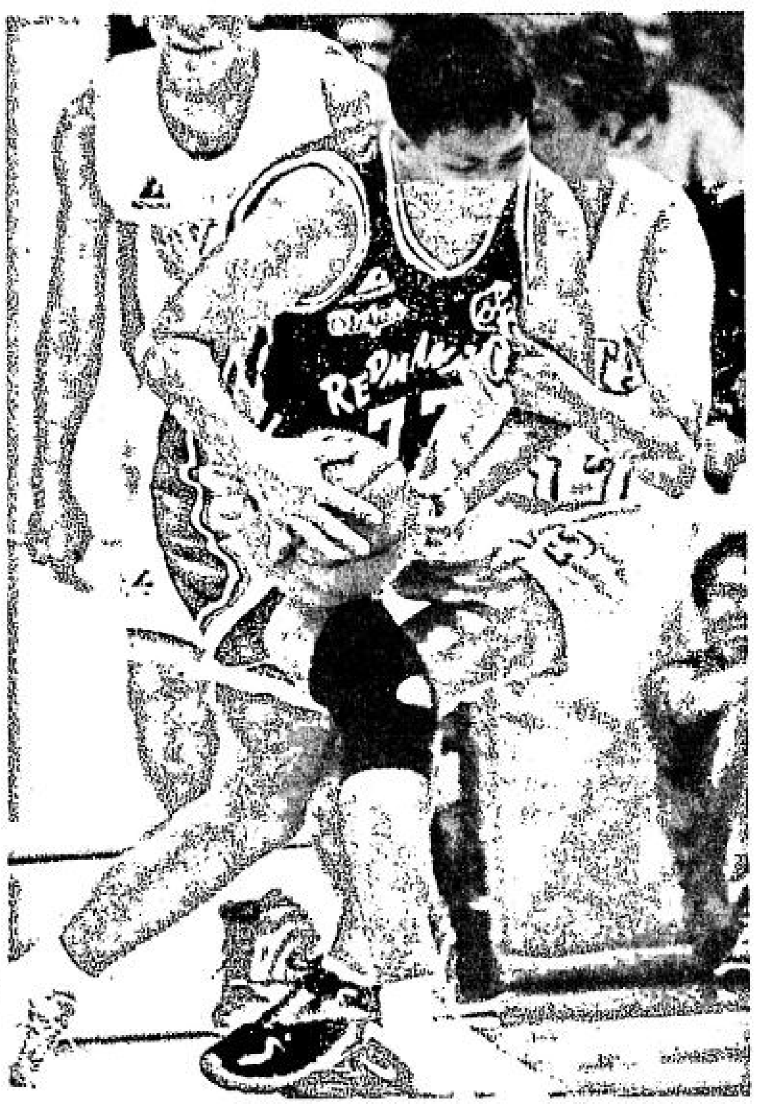

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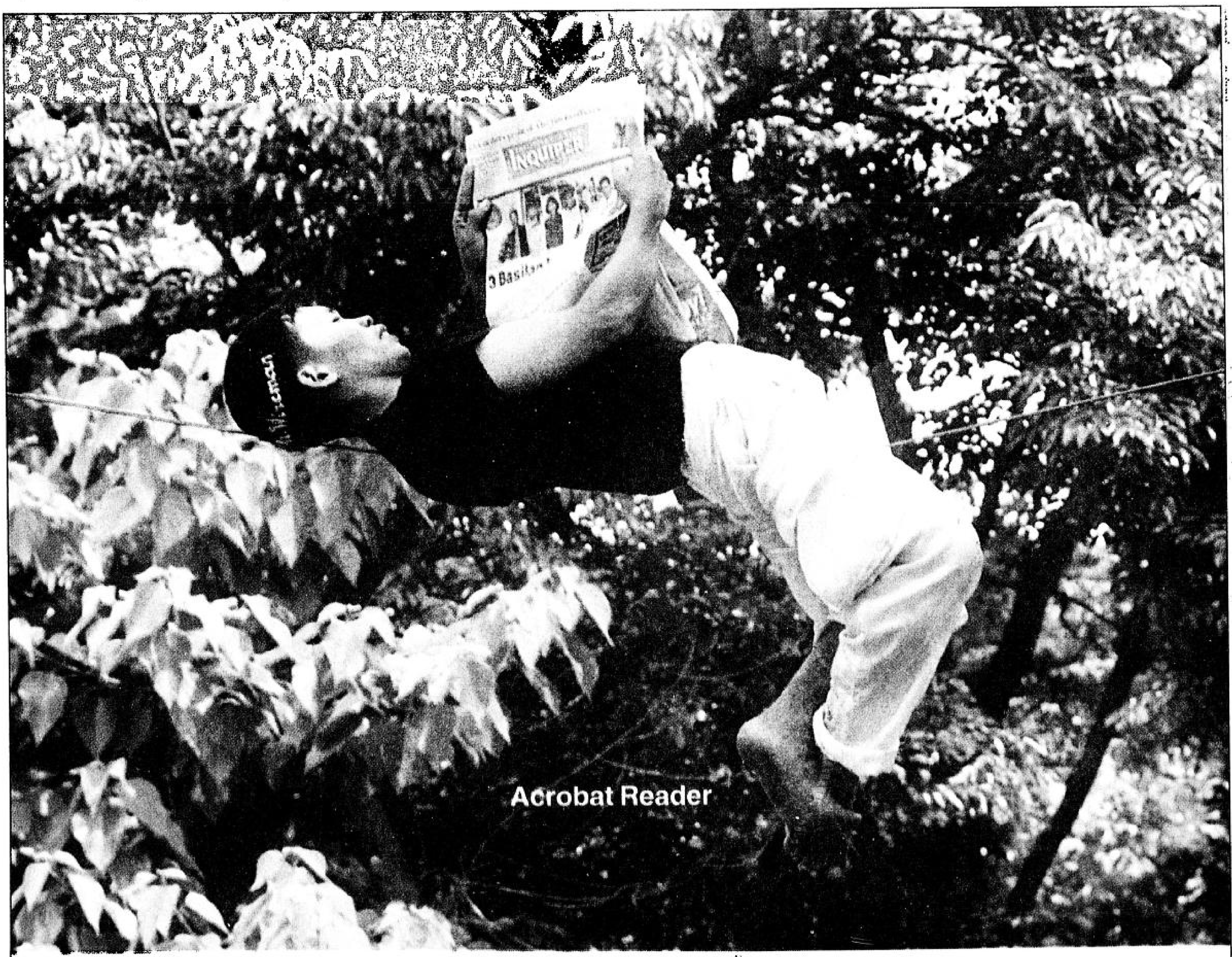

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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
News that makes a difference

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I care for Kerr

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

ADJUSTMENTS had to be made if San Antonio was to avoid a Game 7. That was the squad's natural course if the Spurs wanted to stop Dallas dead on its track.

San Antonio did just that yesterday and won Game 6, 90-78, to clinch the NBA Western Conference crown. But it wasn't that simple.

A Game 7 has always been the most dangerous of all games in a best-of-seven series. It is usually the quicksand of the favorite, the playground of the underdog. In a Game 7, you see a barroom brawl between drunks: No defense, all offense.

But of the two, San Antonio, the heavy favorite, dreads a Game 7 more than Dallas. That is because in a Game 7, the Mavericks, the Spurs' dogged tormentors since Game 1, have nothing to lose but everything to gain.

Minus Dallas' Dirk Nowitzki, the Mavs were playing on borrowed time.

Dallas had been suddenly sensational in Game 5 that if no potion was invented to stop the Mavs' advance in yesterday's Game 6, San Antonio would have been in a deep hole should a Game 7 ensue.

The stigma of a 19-point bubble getting burst by Dallas with Nowitzki sidelined by a knee injury was just too much to endure. Suddenly, Dallas had sliced the gap to 3-2. In front of San Antonio's hometown crowd yet.

The top team blowing away a 19-point lead against a team minus its franchise player is like seeing tiny Manny Pacquiao fighting Lennox Lewis with just one hand and proceeding to knock out the world heavyweight boxing champion in the first round.

Doesn't make sense.

For sure, San Antonio coach Gregg Popovich knew the hole he was in going to yesterday's Game 6. He needed to adjust, re-map his strategy, review his soldiers. Who was fresh, who was fagged out? Do we still have a surprise package here, an untapped manpower waiting to explode?

For sure, too, San Antonio got scratched and not clawed with that debacle in Game 5. But a gash could worsen into a wound if not attended to properly. The bruise that was the Game 5 loss could graduate into a man-sized gangrene that a major surgery might be needed the moment a Game 7 materializes.

And so, a foolproof cure had to be discovered. Game 6 had to be won because Game 6 itself was the Western Conference championship.

At first, Popovich appeared to grope for winners from his bench.

Sure, Tim Duncan dished out his usual dose of firepower and scored 10 of San Antonio's first 20 points in the game.

But still, San Antonio couldn't shake off Dallas. Like a bad dream, Dallas kept coming back. At first quarter's end, the score was tied at 22. The piggyback ride on San Antonio Dallas kept playing to the hilt.

Dallas took the half, 46-40, and next raced to its biggest lead of 15 points, 63-48. Suddenly, a Game 7 appeared ready to pop up. Until Popovich found the antidote near the end of the third quarter: Steve Kerr.

Kerr who?

Couldn't care less?

Think again, fellas.

Kerr was the Chicago sharpshooter who helped the Bulls secure four of six NBA championship rings in the last millennium.

OK, what's that adjustment again on Kerr that Popovich did yesterday to finally steer his Spurs away from a Game 7 headache?

A benchwarmer in the first five games of the series, Popovich gave Kerr the license to shoot from afar. Kerr responded quickly, firing a triple with barely a minute left in the third period. Kerr's shot triggered a crippling 28-4 blast that erased a 65-53 Dallas margin and erected an 81-71 San Antonio bubble.

The biggest blows from Kerr came via back-to-back three-pointers that finally gave San Antonio the lead at 74-71 from a 68-71 deficit. With 4:01 left, Kerr hit his last trey of the game for a 79-71 San Antonio lead.

The contest was virtually over from there as Dallas found no answer to Kerr's resurrected hot hands.

So devastating was San Antonio's rampage that Dallas was limited to an all-time low of nine points in the last quarter. In contrast, San Antonio had 22 in that stretch, with Kerr making 3-of-3 from the trey and 4-of-4 overall for the day.

Still and all, if not for that adjustment Popovich had coded K-E-R-R, we might be looking at a Game 7 right now. Who said that at 37, which was Kerr's age, one is old dog in basketball?

C'mon, fellas, sound the siren to recall Robert Jaworski from retirement. He might yet be what the doctor ordered for Barangay Ginebra.

* * *

FASTBREAK. Here's a glass to Enrico Villanueva, one of only three rookies selected for the PBA All-Star game tomorrow. Villanueva's feat is something to crow about because he is a forward, a slot inhabited by an array of talented players. Indeed, the former Ateneo Blue Eagle and MVP of both the UAAP and PBL last year, has steadily climbed up the ladder of PBA excellence.

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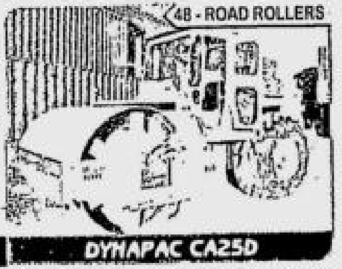

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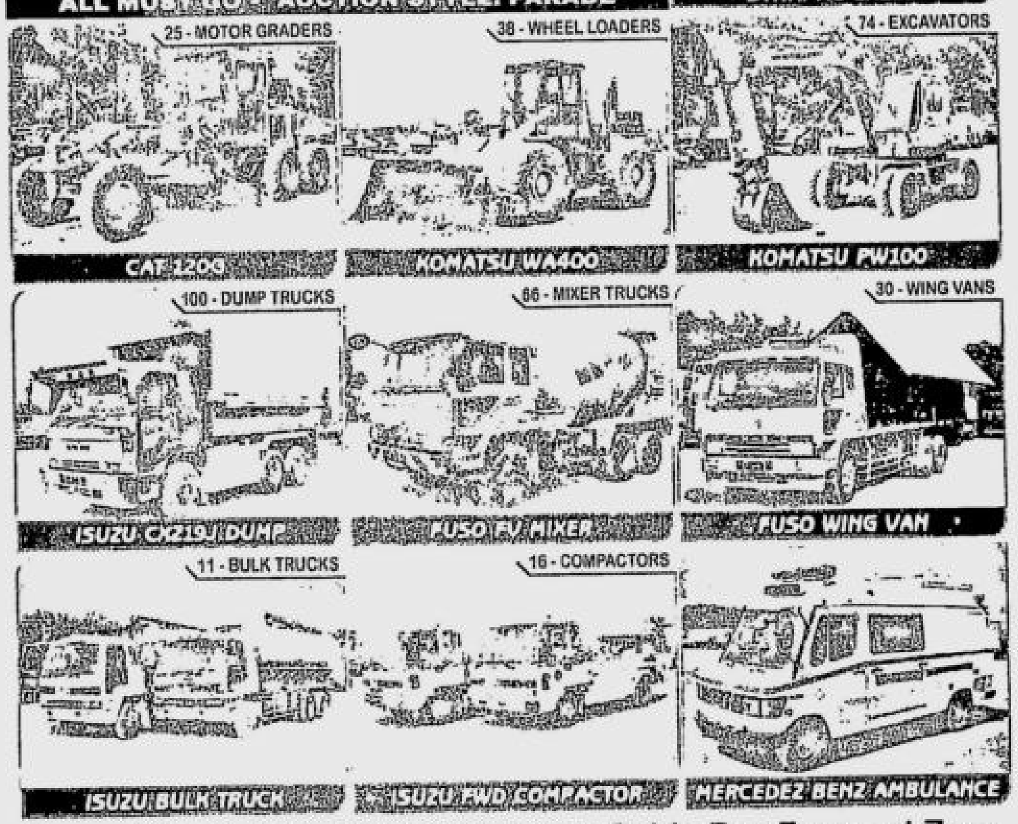

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38 - WHEEL LOADERS
KOMATSU WA400
74 - EXCAVATORS
KOMATSU PW100
100 - DUMP TRUCKS
ISUZU CXZ19J DUMP
66 - MIXER TRUCKS
FUSO FV MIXER
30 - WING VANS
FUSO WING VAN
11 - BULK TRUCKS
ISUZU BULK TRUCK
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Montaña, Hapee go for berths in finals

STANDINGS (Semifinals)	W	L
Montana	3	1
Hapee	3	1
Viva	2	2
John-O	0	4

GAMES TODAY *(San Juan Gym)*
PBL Midgets Under 13
9:30 a.m.—Selecta Moo vs Sunkist
11 a.m.—Hapee vs Blu Star
Sunkist-Unity Cup
2 p.m.—Hapee vs John-O
4 p.m.—Viva vs Montana

HAPEE Toothpaste and Montaña Pawnshop try to forge a championship duel for the Sunkist-PBL Unity Cup when they tackle separate opponents today at the San Juan Gym.

Hapee battles ousted John-O at 2 p.m. while Montana tangles with Viva Mineral Water at 4 p.m.

Victories by Hapee and Montaña will put them in the best-of-five championship series, relegating Viva and John-O in the best-of-three battle for third place.

Hapee draws the lighter assignment as it has beaten John-O, 69-62, in their first semifinals encounter on Tuesday.

Montaña, on the other hand, yielded to Viva, 82-74, last Tuesday.

Viva is hoping that its run-and-gun game would click again today for it to repeat over Montaña.

Losses by Hapee and Montaña will create a three-way tie for first place. In such a scenario, the team with the highest quotient will enter the finals outright with the two other teams engaging in a playoff to determine its opponent.

Both games will be aired live simultaneously over Solar Sports Channel 29 and the National Broadcasting Network.

Hapee and Montaña came off rousing victories on Thursday to share top spot in the semifinals with 3-1 win-loss cards.

Hapee subdued Viva, 74-65, while Montaña ousted John-O from the finals with a 72-59 victory.

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Juven Joson / Josiah & Janna
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Alex Santos / Troy, Tim, Sam & Teddy
Dad Pardilla / Wesley, Genna, Gianna, Dondon
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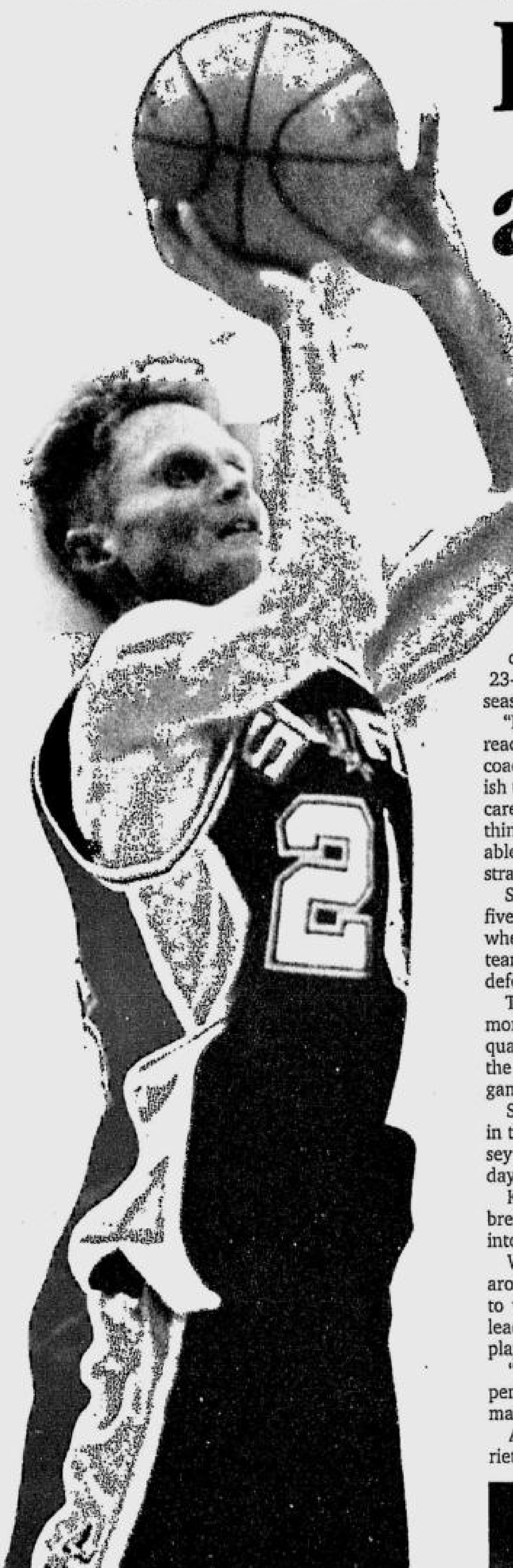
It's Kerr's big night as Spurs enter finals



RISING to the occasion, Steve Kerr of San Antonio jumps for one of the four triples that killed the Dallas Mavericks. AFP

DALLAS — After playing only 13 minutes in the entire postseason, Steve Kerr made four shots from 3-point range to steer the San Antonio Spurs over the Dallas Mavericks 90-78 Thursday and take the Western Conference finals 4-2.

It seemed like a desperate move when the Spurs inserted the 37-year-old guard into the game late in the third quarter, but instead it ended up looking brilliant. Kerr calmed a jittery team during a stunning 23-0 fourth-quarter run that ended Dallas' season.

"I mentioned to Steve that he needed to be ready tonight, and he was real ready," Spurs coach Gregg Popovich said. "It's a fitting finish to what I thought would be the end of his career, but he told me we're going to have to think about an extension or he won't be available for the finals. And he said that with a straight face."

Stephen Jackson added 24 points, making five of San Antonio's 10 3-pointers, on a night when Tim Duncan was double- and triple-teamed constantly by Dallas' collapsing zone defense.

The Spurs held Dallas without a point for more than eight minutes during the fourth quarter to turn a lopsided game that favored the Mavs into the exact opposite — a lopsided game that was all Spurs down the stretch.

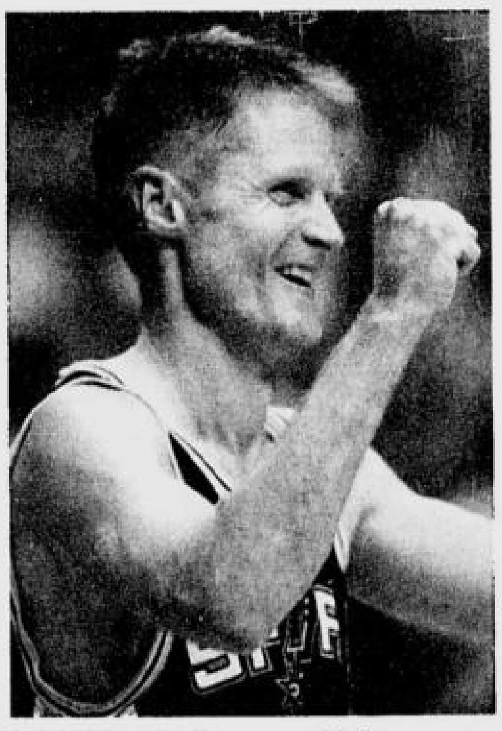
San Antonio, which outscored Dallas 34-9 in the fourth, advanced to play the New Jersey Nets in the NBA Finals beginning Wednesday night.

Kerr had three of his 3-pointers in the backbreaking 23-0 run that turned a 71-58 deficit into an 81-71 lead.

With the Mavericks collapsing on defense around Duncan, the Spurs were forced to try to win it from long range. Kerr, the career leader in 3-point accuracy, was the perfect player to lead the barrage.

"I figured just let it fly and see what happens," Kerr said. "I haven't been a difference maker in a long time."

All four of his 3s were of the wide-open variety, each hitting nothing but net. Kerr only got the chance to play because Tony Parker had a stomach virus and backup Speedy Claxton was ineffective.



CELEBRATING, Kerr pumps his fists to put an exclamation point to another trey. AFP

ALL SMILES, Steve Kerr stands next to the Western Conference trophy following the Spurs' victory. REUTERS

Kerr, who won three NBA titles with Chicago and one with the Spurs in 1999, finished with 12 points, three assists and two rebounds.

"This is one of best nights of my career, ranks right up there with anything that happened in Chicago. There's always a chance to have one moment, and tonight was one of those nights," Kerr said.

Duncan had 18 points and 11 rebounds, Malik Rose scored 12 points and Manu Ginobili had 11 to help San Antonio overcome scoreless outings from two starters — Parker and Bruce Bowen.

Nick Van Exel had 19 points to lead the Mavericks, who were without 7-footer Dirk Nowitzki for the third straight game because of a knee injury.

Dallas missed seven shots and had six turnovers in the fateful 23-0 run.

"It was a matter of them turning their gear up a level and we couldn't get any higher. That was the end of it," Dallas coach Don Nelson said.

It seemed as though the Mavericks had broken the game open in the early part of the third quarter, quickly extending a six-point halftime lead into double digits and keeping it there for most of the remainder of the period.

Dallas scored the first six points of the third, the final two coming when Steve Nash got isolated at the top of the key against Duncan, drove around him and fed Raef LaFrentz for an easy layup.

An easy layup was what Duncan missed on the Spurs' next possession, and a 3-pointer by Walt Williams got the lead up to 55-42. Claxton threw away passes on two of the next three possessions, then had his shot blocked by Finley.

Popovich had seen enough and turned to his third-stringer, Kerr, who had played only 3 minutes in this series. Kerr hit his first shot, a 3-pointer from the corner with 1:38 left in the third, but more important was the calming influence he brought to the floor as he stayed out there for a nearly 12-minute stretch."

NBA FINALS 2003

San Antonio vs New Jersey

Spurs 0, Nets 0

Game 1 at San Antonio (June 5, 8 a.m.)
Game 2 at San Antonio (June 7, 8 a.m.)
Game 3 at New Jersey (June 9, 8 a.m.)
Game 4 at New Jersey (June 12, 8 a.m.)
*Game 5 at New Jersey (June 14, 8 a.m.)
*Game 6 at San Antonio (June 16, 8 a.m.)
*Game 7 at San Antonio (June 19, 8 a.m.).

*IF NECESSARY
(MANILA TIME, 2-3-2 FORMAT)

US completes Dream Team for Olympiad

DENVER, Colorado--The U.S. men's Olympic roster was completed Thursday when Los Angeles Clippers Elton Brand, New Jersey Nets Richard Jefferson and University of Kansas All-American Nick Collison were added.

"We have now completed the 12-man roster for this year's Olympic qualifying team," said USA Basketball President Tom Jernstedt.

"We feel we have a deep and talented roster that is poised to accomplish our objectives of winning the gold medal at this summer's qualifying tournament and next year's 2004 Olympic Games.

In the aftermath of a humbling sixth place finish at last year's world championship, USA Basketball has assembled a team that it expects will reaffirm its position as the world's dominant basketball power.

The other nine men are Karl Malone (Utah Jazz), Ray Allen (Seattle Supersonic), Jason Kidd (New Jersey Nets), Tim Duncan (San Antonio Spurs), Kobe Bryant (Los Angeles Lakers), Allen Iverson (Philadelphia 76ers), Jermaine O'Neal (Indiana Pacers), Tracy McGrady (Orlando Magic) and Mike Bibby (Sacramento Kings).

Both Brand and Collison, the only non-NBA player on the roster, represented their country at the 2002 world championship.

The U.S. have been gold medallists in 12 of the 14 Olympics in which basketball has been played, including the last three when NBA players have participated (1992, 1996, 2000).

Native New Yorker on verge of Triple Crown

NEW YORK—He'd make the model neighbor, the ideal best friend, the perfect date for your teenage daughter.

He possesses, according to those who know him best, a great personality and a strong will. A native New Yorker, he's easy-going, good-looking and hard-working.

Sure, he's only 3 years old. But in less than a week, Funny Cide — a longshot gelding turned Secretariat-in-waiting over the last month — could emerge as the first Triple Crown winner in 25 years by winning the Belmont Stakes.

Since capturing the Kentucky Derby as a 12-1 shot on May 3, Funny Cide has evolved into a horse both popular and populist, a blue-collar hero with bridle and bit.

"He's the underdog, the people's choice," said Bill Nader, senior vice president of the New York Racing Association. "What's great is this horse snuck up on people. ... It's the way he won."

And it's the way he acts, both on and off the track. Around the barns at his Belmont home, Funny Cide is frequently discussed in anthropomorphic terms.

"He's got a nice personality," said trainer Barclay Tagg, standing outside Barn No. 6 after Funny Cide completed a recent training run. "He's a bit of a ham."

In fact, Funny Cide appears more comfortable with the media than his trainer. The horse preens for photographers and camera crews, bobbing his head confidently — a chestnut Sylvester Stallone working the red carpet on Oscar night.

"The attention is unnatural for us," said co-trainer Robin Smullen, who also doubles as the horse's practice rider. "But Funny Cide loves it." *AP*

SPORTS noodle

Bong Barrameda VOL I NO. 011

Ali! Ali! Ali!

A serving of 7 questions, from easiest to toughest, each with a corresponding point value. Can you score a perfect 100 (or, at least, beat the other 'sports genius/geniuses' beside you)?

1 > 3 Pts.

☐ True / ☐ False: The Ali Mall in Cubao, Quezon-the country"s first enclosed shopping center-was named after Muhammad Ali.

2 > 5 Pts.

At the 1960 Rome Olympics, Ali (then still, known as Cassius Clay, Jr.) won the gold medal in what boxing division?

☐ Middleweight
☐ Light heavyweight

3 > 7 Pts.

The 1975 'Thrilla in Manila' between Ali and Joe Frazier officially ended as a TKO win for the latter in what round?

☐ 13th
☐ 14th
☐ 15th

4 > 10 Pts.

Who was the last man to fight-and beat--Muhammad Ali?

☐ Larry Holmes
☐ Trevor Berbick
☐ Leon Spinks

5 > 15 Pts.

What's the title of the 1996 documentary inspired by the 'Rumble in the Jungle' encounter between Ali and George Foreman in 1974?

☐ "The Lords of the Ring"
☐ "Let's Get Ready to Rumble"
☐ "Jungle Fever"
☐ "When We Were Kings"

6 > 25 Pts.

After he was banned from boxing in 1967 for refusing to serve the US Army, Ali put up a chain of fast-food restaurants. What was the name of this chain?

☐ Champ Burgers
☐ Knockout Cafe
☐ Ali's Shuffle Souffle
☐ Great Taste

7 > 30 Pts.

Arguably, Muhammad Ali has signed more autographs than any other human being in history. He never turns down an autograph request because, when he was a boy, one of his boxing idols refused to sign one for him. Who was this legendary boxer who told Ali, "I ain't got time"?

ANSWERS/ A30

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Mike Tyson at it again

WASHINGTON—Former undisputed world heavyweight champion Mike Tyson denied in a television interview on Thursday that he had raped Desiree Washington in 1991 but added he would like to rape her and her mother now.

The 36-year-old Tyson claimed Washington's accusations had been motivated by money and that he would not have been convicted had he got a fair trial.

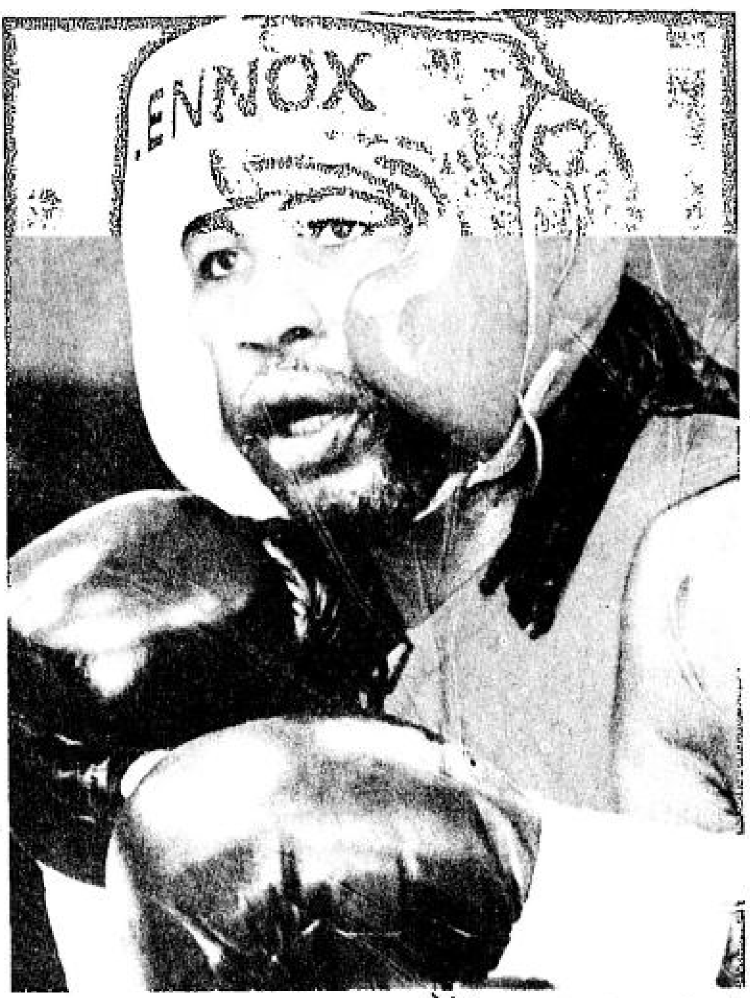
In 1992, Tyson was sent down for six years for raping the beauty pageant contestant in an Indianapolis hotel room but was released after just three years.

"I just hate her guts," he said about Washington in an excerpt of an interview with Fox News Television.

"She put me in that state where I just don't know. I really wish I did now .... but now I really want to rape her and her .... mamma." Tyson is no stranger to controversy, he caused outrage when he once said he wanted to eat British heavyweight Lennox Lewis' children.

He is running out of time to accept an offer for a place on a June 21 fight card featuring Lewis after rejecting Don King's proposal. *AFP*

TYSON



CHAMP IN TRAINING. Heavyweight boxing champion Lennox Lewis spars during a workout in his training camp. AFP

Long layoff no factor, says Lennox Lewis

SCOTRUN, Pennsylvania—Heavyweight champ Lennox Lewis says his yearlong absence from the boxing ring will help him next month in his championship fight against Kirk Johnson.

"If I was 21, 22 or 23 and I took a year off, it would be detrimental because I would be out partying," the 37-year-old Lewis said Thursday. "At this age, it was a much-needed time off. I was a busy heavyweight for a long time. It gave me a chance to heal some nagging wounds.

"But like fine wine, I get better with time," said Lewis, who spoke from his camp headquarters at Caesar's Brookdale Resort, where he has been training for the past 5 1/2 weeks. He will leave in two weeks for his June 21 showdown with 31-year-old Johnson at Staples Center in Los Angeles.

Lewis and his trainer, Emanuel Steward, believe speed will be the key to the fight, the first title fight in Los Angeles since Floyd Patterson recorded a 13th-round TKO over Roy Harris in 1958.

"Kirk Johnson is very dangerous," Steward said. "He has very fast hands. Lennox has really worked on his own speed. (Johnson) is a hype-type guy who has the ability to win fights without beating you. You never know when he is going to explode. Anytime a guy has speed, it can be a problem. But Lennox is in good shape and we are looking forward to it."

The fight will be the first for Lewis (40-2-1, 31 knockouts) since he successfully defended his WBC/IBF crown by knocking out Mike Tyson in the eighth round in Memphis on June 8, 2002.

Johnson (34-1-1, 25 KOs) has won two fights since he was disqualified in a 10-round bout against John Ruiz for the WBA heavyweight title on July 27. In his last bout, Johnson stopped Lou Savarese with a fourth-round TKO March 15.

Lewis said a reevaluation of his career goals has allowed for extra time off.

"At one point, our main goal was to win all the belts," Lewis said. "I accomplished that, but I realized I was putting myself in a situation with a lot of fights. But, at this point the belts don't mean anything. It comes down to being the champion. Without all the belts, I have saved the drama and some money."

Though Lewis has hinted at retirement, he said he would also like a bout with top contender Vitali Klitschko, who is fighting on the undercard.

"I definitely want Klitschko," Lewis said. "I want him for lunch. But right now, I'm not forcing myself to fight. It comes naturally. There has to be a good reason to stop, but it hasn't happened yet. I'm not looking at it for the money. I figure why retire at this point? I still have one or two years left, and there is really no one out there who can beat me."

One of the biggest challenges could be attempting to carry a card in Los Angeles, a city unaccustomed to heavyweight boxing.

"This is a town that likes excitement," Lewis said. "This gives the opportunity for a lot of stars to have a night out, instead of going all the way out to Las Vegas. This is a good card, and we are all looking forward to it."

Down the road, Steward sees a possible match with Roy Jones Jr., who recently won a fight in the heavyweight division.

"I think it will happen in about 18 months," Steward said. *AP*

Devils roast Ducks for 2-0 finals lead

EAST RUTHERFORD, New Jersey—Patrik Elias and Scott Gomez scored second-period goals set up by the seldom-used Ukrainian defenseman Oleg Tverdovsky on Thursday as the New Jersey Devils seized a 2-0 finals lead with a 3-0 victory over the Anaheim Mighty Ducks.

Martin Brodeur tied Dominik Hasek's 2002 record of six shutouts in a playoff year with his second in succession and, just as in a 3-0 victory in Game 1, was barely challenged. The Ducks had only 16 shots, including just two in the Devils' decisive second period, and have only 32 in two games.

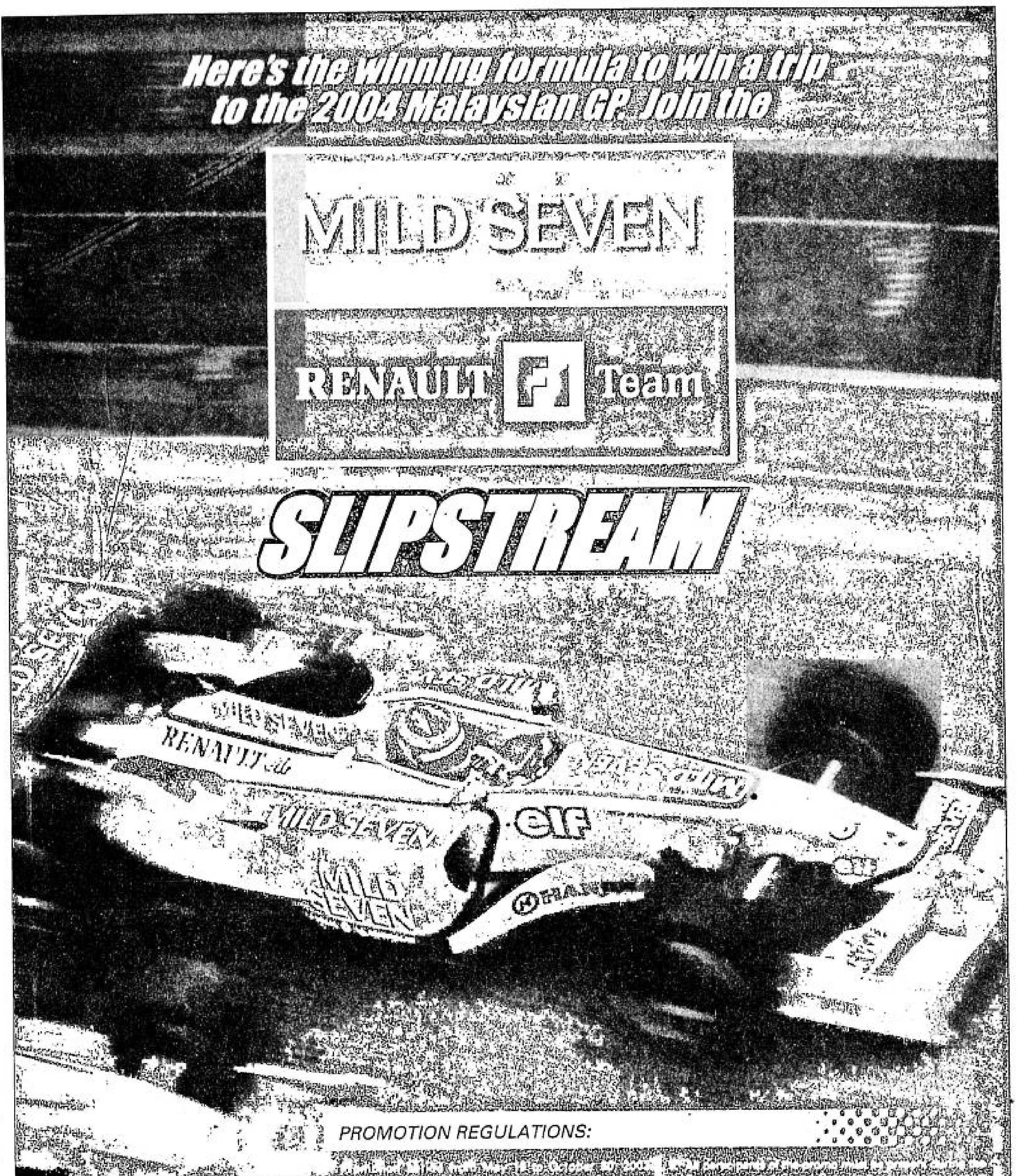
Brodeur is the first goalie to start the finals with consecutive shutouts since Toronto's Frank McCool had three straight against Detroit in 1945, a series the Maple Leafs eventually needed seven games to win.

"What's important is we're winning," Brodeur said. "You've got to be excited about starting the series like this."

Especially considering Anaheim's Jean-Sebastien Giguere was the hot goalie going into the finals and was considered the favorite for the Conn Smythe Trophy. Apparently, Brodeur took that as a personal challenge.

"You want to be the best out there," Brodeur said. "Jean-Sebastien really proved that he belonged here and he's playing so far really well. We're getting really good goals on him. But definitely it's really an incentive to beat the best goalie that's playing right now."

Remarkably, the key to the Devils' victory, just as in Game 1, were players obtained from Anaheim in a trade for Petr Sykora last summer. *AP*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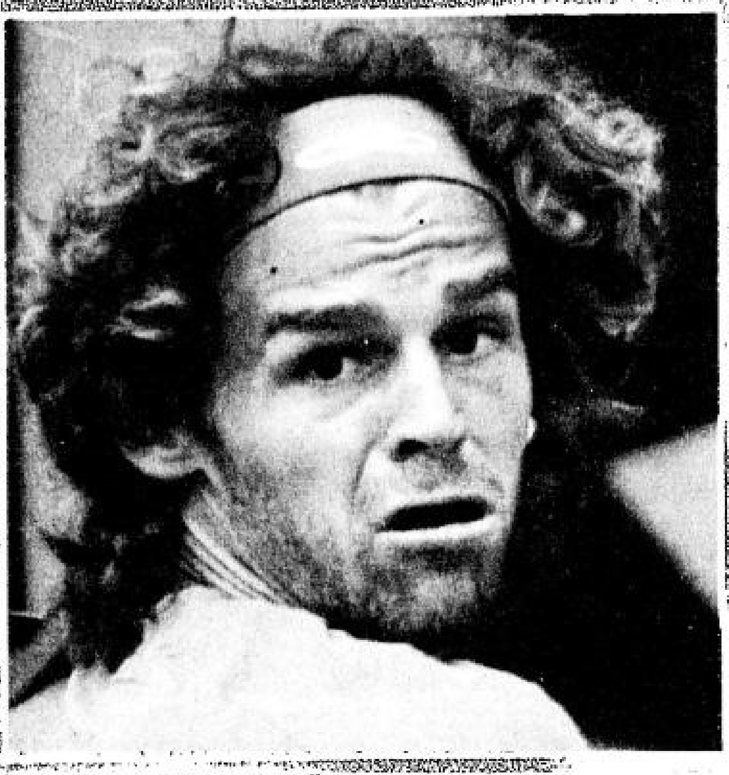
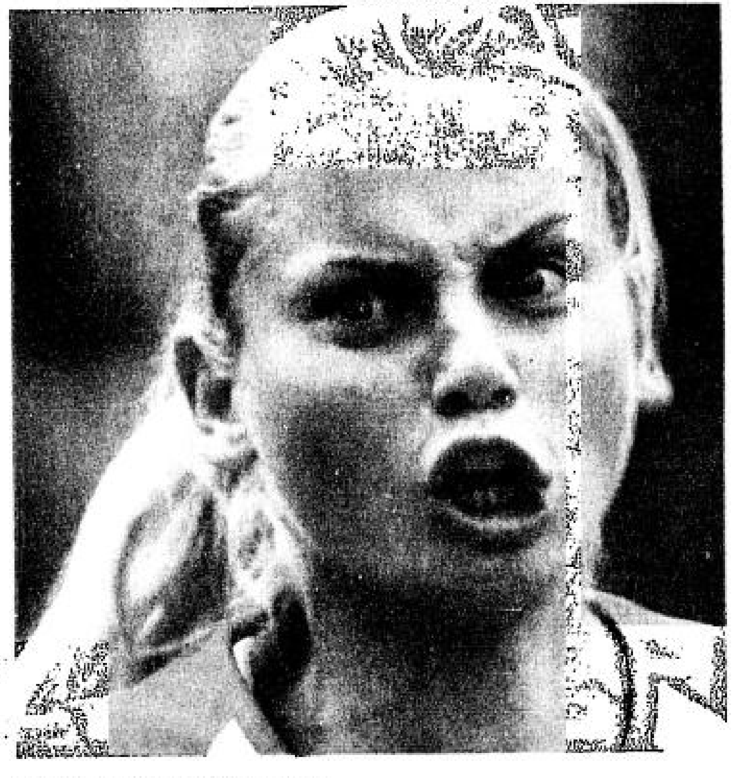
FACES AT THE FRENCH OPEN


GUSTAVO KUETEN of Brazil

TINA PISNIK of Slovakia

LLEYTON HEWITT of Australia


JELENA DOKIC of Yugoslavia

ALBERT COSTA of Spain

VENUS WILLIAMS of the United States

Voila! French qualifier hits big payday

PARIS—Bills and taxes are no longer a concern, at least for the moment. All Nicolas Coutelot has to worry about is fellow Frenchman Arnaud Clement.

They'll play in the third round Saturday in the French Open, where Coutelot has become the most captivating story of the first week. He beat Italy's Davide Sanguinetti in the opening round, then outlasted 2002 Wimbledon runner-up David Nalbandian of Argentina on Thursday, 6-3, 6-3, 4-6, 2-6, 6-1.

Not bad for a player ranked 208th who arrived at Roland Garros without a victory at the tour level this year. He's the only qualifier among the 64 men and women still in the tournament.

"I'm not afraid of anyone," said Coutelot, a 26-year-old native of Strasbourg in eastern France. "It would be incredible if I got all the way to the end. If I said I can win the French Open, well, people think I'm mad. If you like, I'm mad."

If Coutelot is wrong and loses his next match, he'll still receive $40,800–more than his annual average in prize money since turning pro in 1995.

"It's hard because there are bills to pay, taxes to pay," he said after his first-round win. "People think we all drive around in Porsches. If you like, I'll take you to the parking lot and show you what I drive around in."

While Coutelot enjoys his ride at Roland Garros, several top players find themselves struggling to stay in the chase.

Defending champion Albert Costa of Spain has played two five-set matches, each lasting precisely three hours, 38 minutes. On Thursday he edged Radek Stepanek of the Czech Republic 6-3, 5-7, 6-4, 3-6, 6-4.

No. 1 Lleyton Hewitt of Australia has played more than 6 1/2 hours in two wins. He reached the third round by beating Russia's Nikolay Davydenko 6-3, 4-6, 6-3, 7-6 (5).

Three-time champion Gustavo Kuerten of Brazil had an easier time, routing Morocco's Hicham Arazi 6-1, 6-0, 6-1.

In women's play, second-seeded Belgian Kim Clijsters, and Americans No. 3 Venus Williams, No. 6 Lindsay Davenport and No. 7 Jennifer Capriati advanced. Only Williams was extended to three sets before she secured a 6-3, 4-6, 6-2 victory over Australia's Evie Dominikovic, who took satisfaction in coming close.

"I was happy I was playing Venus and not Serena," Dominikovic said.

Coutelot's five-setter was just the second of his career, and he described the experience as frightening. In the fifth set his stomach hurt, and on an 80-degree afternoon he said he felt cold.

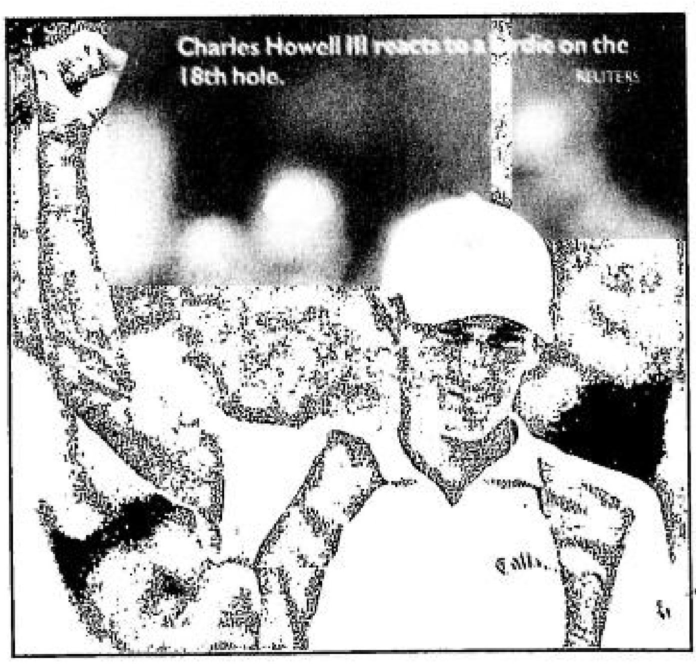
But he played some of his best tennis down the stretch, while Nalbandian faded, smashing his racket several times in frustration. Coutelot complained in vain to the chair umpire that Nalbandian should have received a warning.

"I just ask, 'If we can break two, three, four rackets, tell me, because I'm going to enjoy it, too,'" Coutelot said.

AP

Tiger stalks Howell in Memorial golf

DUBLIN, Ohio—A sunny day at Muirfield Village should have been the first clue that the opening round at the Memorial might contain a few surprises.


Charles Howell III reacts to a birdie on the 18th hole. REUTERS

Charles Howell III got the best one Thursday when he watched his 45-foot putt feed down the slope and curl into the cup on No. 18 for his eighth birdie in 12 holes, giving him an 8-under 64 and a one-stroke lead over Kenny Perry.

"What can I say? When things start going your way, they go your way," said Howell, who matched the best first-round score in the 28-year history of the Memorial.

Tiger Woods, playing on the PGA Tour for the first time since the Masters, made a birdie from 25 feet on the final hole for a 67. It was his lowest opening round since a 66 in the Disney Classic last October, but that's not what left him amazed.

"The scores are so low today," Woods said. "It's hard to believe that 4-under is probably not going to be in the top 10. You don't see that on this golf course."

Another surprise was seeing Nicklaus make a brief appearance on the leaderboard–only it wasn't Jack, the tournament host and winner of 18 majors.

Gary Nicklaus, the 34-year-old son of the Golden Bear who is playing on a sponsor's exemption, birdied five of his first nine holes before faltering to a 69.

The old man struggled to a 4-over 76, a score that left him in a grumpy mood considering how easy his beloved Muirfield Village played.

"With the greens relatively soft and without any wind, you're going to have to put the pins in the bunkers to make it any tougher," Jack Nicklaus said.

He had no complaints about the weather. Few tournaments have had worse weather issues than the Memorial. Only three times in the last 14 years has the tournament been completed without any type of rain delay.

Thursday was a nice break with mostly sunny skies, a mild breeze and smooth greens that allowed 56 players to shoot par or better–more than half of the 104-man field.

No one took advantage quite like Howell.

He played a practice round with Nicklaus last year and got a better idea how to play the course from its designer. The formula was simple on Thursday, as Howell belted his drives down the wide fairways and gave himself easy scoring opportunities.

He made six birdies putts inside 15 feet, rolled in a 12-footer for eagle on No. 15, and made the longest putt he had all day on the final hole.

"I really didn't have many putts over the 15- to 20-foot range," Howell said. "Now I had a putt from 45 feet across the green. I was very fortunate to get the speed right. It was perfect enough to drop in. I would have taken a par and left."

Still, his most important hole might have been a bogey.

Howell hit a 9-iron that was going right at the flag on No. 6, but hit the bank and rolled back into the pond. He dropped 100 yards from the green, hit sand wedge to 8 feet and holed the putt for a bogey to limit the damage.

"That was important for me to keep it going," he said.

The bad news for Howell? A first-round leader has never gone on to win the Memorial.

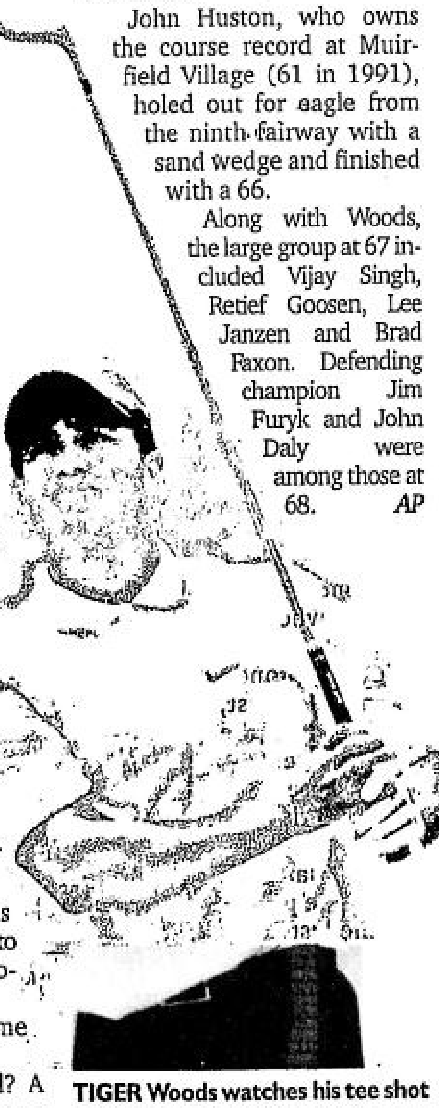
Perry is coming off a six-stroke victory at Colonial, where he finished at a tournament-record 19 under par. He is 26 under over his last five rounds.

"Very similar golf to last week," Perry said. The only difference was he didn't have to answer a single question about Annika Sorenstam.

John Huston, who owns the course record at Muirfield Village (61 in 1991), holed out for eagle from the ninth fairway with a sand wedge and finished with a 66.

Along with Woods, the large group at 67 included Vijay Singh, Retief Goosen, Lee Janzen and Brad Faxon. Defending champion Jim Furyk and John Daly were among those at 68.

AP


TIGER Woods watches his tee shot on the 3rd hole during the first round of the Memorial. REUTERS

It's Annika mania in ladies' tour

AURORA, Illinois—Annika Sorenstam's tee time was still 15 minutes away and the crowd had already reached Tiger-esque proportions.

About 500 people, standing eight to 10 deep. Men, women and children. Fans and neophytes alike, many sporting the "Go Annika" buttons that are the latest rage in golf fashion.

Even her playing partners broke into applause when she walked onto the first tee for a pro-am at the Kellogg-Keebler Classic on Thursday.

"We were so proud of you last week," said Marianne Durham, one of her playing partners and a golf coach at a local girls' high school.

"I'll say," someone in the crowd murmured.

A week after her historic PGA Tour debut at the Colonial, Sorenstam is hoping life will gradually return to normal now that she's back on the LPGA Tour. If the pro-am was any indication, things will never quite be the same.

"I went to Starbucks this morning and everybody recognized me there," she said, smiling. "It hasn't really sunk in yet, and we'll see what comes out of this. But if I touched any little girl, any woman who felt like it opened doors for someone, that's great."

Judging by the scene at Stonebridge Country Club, Sorenstam touched more people than she'll ever realize. Though she missed the cut at the Colonial, the frenzy that surrounded her last week shows no signs of slowing down.

While last year's pro-am drew only a couple of hundred people –most of whom were there because they knew one of the players–the event Thursday almost had the feel of a final round. Fans clustered around the putting green and driving range just to catch a glimpse of her.

People carried Colonial flags for her to autograph, and the hottest items being sold were $3 buttons. "Go Annika" in Day-Glo yellow or "Annika-Mania Catch It!" in baby blue.

The gallery–Annika's Army, perhaps?–followed her like groupies, all but ignoring everyone else on the course, and security officers tailed her all afternoon. Though Sorenstam made plans to sign autographs after her practice round, fans repeatedly swarmed her for pictures as she moved from hole to hole.

"She has the charisma," said Judy Smith of Chicago, who traveled to the Colonial last week and then cut her trip short to come back and see Sorenstam defend her title at the Kellogg-Keebler Classic.

AP

SPORTS noodle

Answers from page A28

1. True
2. Light heavyweight
3. 14th (Frazier failed to answer the bell for the 15th round)
4. Trevor Berbick (on a 10-round unanimous decision in Kingston, Jamaica, in 1981)
5. "When We Were Kings"
6. Champ Burgers (it lasted only two years)
7. Sugar Ray Robinson

Ferrari rules narrow streets of Monte Carlo

MONACO—Ferrari ruled the streets of Monte Carlo on Thursday with Formula One world champion Michael Schumacher leading teammate Rubens Barrichello in first qualifying for Sunday's Grand Prix.

The German, seeking a record-equaling sixth win in Monaco to take over the championship lead, was a master of precision as he lapped the tight and twisty street circuit in one minute 16.305 seconds.

"It is always difficult to predict what can happen here in Monaco, but we can be confident for the rest of the weekend as the car is working well," said Schumacher.

The champion has started on pole and won the last three races in a row this season. He was well inside last year's pole time of 1:16.676, set on a slightly different circuit by Colombian Juan Pablo Montoya in a Williams.

Brazilian Barrichello was 0.331 behind the five-time champion to ensure that the Ferrari drivers will run last of all in Saturday's decisive one lap qualifying session to determine the starting grid.

Briton Jenson Button was the best of the rest with an impressive third fastest time for BAR while Italian Jarno Trulli underlined Renault's challenge with the fourth fastest time.

His less experienced Spanish team mate Fernando Alonso paid the price for errors on the unforgiving track and ended up 14th.

McLaren's David Coulthard, winner last year and in 2000, was fifth quickest while team mate and championship leader Kimi Raikkonen languished in 11th place.

LOOK MA, TWO WHEELS: Schumacher uses a motorcyle (left) and a scooter to go round the paddock at the Monte Carlo circuit Thursday. AP

The session was halted for 25 minutes to clean up oil dumped on the track by the Sauber of Heinz-Harald Frentzen, whose engine leaked oil as he started his flying lap.

German Frentzen, who failed to start the last race in Austria due to a clutch problem, set no time and will run first on Saturday.

Mark Webber, fastest for Jaguar in morning practice, was next out after marshals had laid cement dust on the oil spill but had to settle for ninth place.

Canadian Jacques Villeneuve, Button's team mate, also had his hopes wrecked by the track conditions.

"This is always a weird weekend and I have to say that so far it is not going well," said Villeneuve. "There was oil and a lot of cement dust on the track. You have to accept that if you are going to change your line to avoid it, you're going to end up going slower." *AP*

Foreigners banned from Japan triathlon due to SARS scare

TOKYO—Non-resident foreigners will be barred from competing in an international triathlon held in Japan next month because of fears of potentially spreading SARS in the country, local organizers said Friday.

Hondo City in Kumamoto prefecture, some 900 kilometers (560 miles) southwest of Tokyo, is to host the 19th Amakusa International Triathlon on June 29, part of the qualifying series for the 2004 Athens Olympic Games.

"But we decided to ask all non-resident foreign athletes to give up their entry due to growing concern about SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome)," said Kazuhiro Funada, director-general of the event's organizing committee.

"Even if athletes from other countries strongly request to take part, we plan to turn them down," Funada said.

The exclusion measure will even extend to those who are from countries reporting no SARS case.

"We decided to apply the measure to all non-resident foreigners because it is difficult to check which country is really safe in terms of SARS," he said.

Japanese athletes entered in the event would be given a general medical check-up, Funada said.

"We will hold discussions with Japan Triathlon Union and let them understand our decision," he said.

Immediate comment from the union, which co-hosts the event, was not available.

About 500 people took part in last year's tournament, and 20 athletes from abroad competed, the organizers said.

Japan has no confirmed SARS case so far, but the nation panicked after discovering that a Taiwanese doctor suspected of suffering from the deadly virus visited Japan.

The 26-year-old Taiwanese doctor, who toured western Japan from May 8 to May 13 and was later confirmed in Taipei to have contracted SARS, is the first known case of the Asia-centred outbreak reaching Japan's shores. *AFP*

34 Indian weightlifters get ax for using banned drugs

NEW DELHI, India—The Indian Weightlifting Federation (IWF) has imposed bans up to two year on 34 weightlifters for taking banned drugs during recent national games, a news report said Friday.

The sport's national governing body also slapped monetary fines on the weightlifters accused in the scandal, the Hindustan Times newspaper reported.

The decision was taken at the first meeting of the newly formed executive committee of the federation held Thursday, the report said.

The weightlifters included 11 from the senior category and 23 from the junior category.

Four senior weightlifters have been banned for two years for taking anabolic steroids, while the rest have been banned for a year for consuming stimulants, the report quoted a federation official as saying.

For juniors "the punishment is one year and six months for steroids and stimulants," said N.R. Chaudhury, vice president of the federation.

"Besides we also decided to impose a fine of 3000 rupees (US$63) on those lifters testing positive for steroids and 1000 rupees (US$21) for stimulants which applicable for both juniors and seniors," Chaudhury was quoted as saying. *AP*

SPORTSWATCH

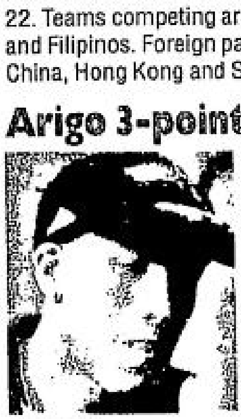
Lunas wins Pan Asia boxing title

ROLLY Lunas of the Philippines won the Pan Asia Boxing Association flyweight crown by unanimous decision over Thailand's Khunsik Skinduregym in Bangkok on Thursday. Lunas, a former RP flyweight crown-holder, was scheduled to arrive last night with his manager, Manuel Armenta, and international promoter Jun Sarreal. Lunas relinquished his RP crown to Z Gorres, who's scheduled to defend the national title tomorrow at the Makati Coliseum.

Chedeng cancels sailing challenge

LEGAZPI CITY—Strong waves and winds brought by typhoon Chedeng forced organizers of the 1st Albay Hobie Sailing Challenge to cancel the event scheduled to start today in Cagraray Island in the first district of Albay. Some 16 Hobie Catamaran boats sailed their way to the area, fresh from their weeklong 220 nautical miles travel from Donsol, Sorsogon to Sogod in northern Cebu. Only 11 teams or Catamaran boats or hobie cats, small sail boats, however, were supposed to vie for the challenge from May 30 to 31 and sail across the seas of Albay Gulf and the Pacific. Department of Tourism Bicol regional director Maria Nini Ravanilla said the event has been rescheduled to coincide with the Tabak Festival in Tabaco City on June 16-22. Teams competing are composed of Philippine-based expatriate sailors and Filipinos. Foreign participants came from Holland, France, Belgium, China, Hong Kong and Saipan. ***Ronnie Lorejo, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau***

Arigo 3-point shootout favorite



ARIGO

ALASKA Milk's John Arigo amassed 15,000 points to make it as All-Star starter of the Governors in the PBA All-Star game tomorrow. Arigo will share backcourt chores with former Alaska stalwart Kenneth Duremdes. Their teammates are Danny Ildefonso, Vergel Meneses, Marlou Aquino, Dondon Hontiveros, Olsen Racela, Kerby Raymundo, Dennis Espino, Mike Cortez, Don Allado and Nic Belasco. The 6-foot-4 Arigo recently made a career-high 29 points on top of 11 rebounds to lift Alaska to a 90-8[illegible] win over Purefoods that stopped the Aces' six-game skid. Arigo is also a favorite in the 3-point shootout.

Philam Homes Intervillage North champ

PHILAM Homes ruled the Nokia Intervillage North Tournament on Monday at The Orchard Golf and Country Club in Dasmariñas, Cavite. It finished the 36-hole elimination tournament for villages in Quezon City with 596 Stableford points, eight points ahead of Don Enrique Heights' 588. White Plains grabbed the third and last spot in the Nokia Grand Championship with a 582 total. Corinthian wound up fourth and Acropolis fifth.

Corporate, celebrity badminton July 14

THE SPORTS House's Corporate and Celebrity Invitational Badminton Tournament will be held July 14-20 at the Rizal Memorial Badminton Hall in Manila and the SM Megamall's Atrium in Mandaluyong City. The tournament is part of the yearlong celebration of the 20th anniversary of Sports House, which is giving away raffle prizes worth P500,000 during the awards night.

Central, Vinzons booters show way

DAET, Camarines Norte—Central Cagers and Vinzons Junior Pilots posted two wins each recently to pace the Red Ribbon Bakeshop Under-14 Football festival at the Eco Athletic Field here. The Cagers whipped the Alawihao Warriors and the San Vincete Bombers while the Junior Pilots blanked both the Balani D' Little Tigers (2-0) and the Daet North Sky Hawks (1-0). Other matches saw D' Little Tigers edge the Urban Kids, 1-0, and the Blue Bombers rout the Blue Dragons, 5-0. Over in Cebu City, the Futbolitos and the Don Bosco Football Center hurdled their respective rivals. Sean Gacayan scored a hat-trick as DBTC downed Don Bosco Boys Town, 4-2, while the Futbolitos blanked Sacred Heart School, 2-0. In Bacolod City, Atleta crushed Sagay FC, 4-0, at the UNO-R field.

Crucial period for F-1

MONACO—The long-term future of the Formula One world championship will be decided within the next three months, according to Renault executive vice president Patrick Faure.

The manufacturers involved in Formula One have been in discussions with the sport's commercial rights owners, SLEC, because they are not satisfied with the amount of revenue that they receive.

Five of the companies - Renault, Ferrari, Daimler-Chrysler, BMW and Ford - have threatened to create a breakaway series named the Grand Prix World Championship (GPWC) if they fail to come to an agreement. The discussions have hit trouble because the shares in SLEC are split between Bayerische Landesbank, JP Morgan and Lehman Brothers banks, who hold 75 percent, and Bernie Ecclestone's Bambino Trust, which holds the other 25 percent.

But Faure believes negotiations are coming to an end and said: "I think we are probably in the last stage of our discussions or negotiations—use which word you like—between us and the banks and the trust. *AFP*

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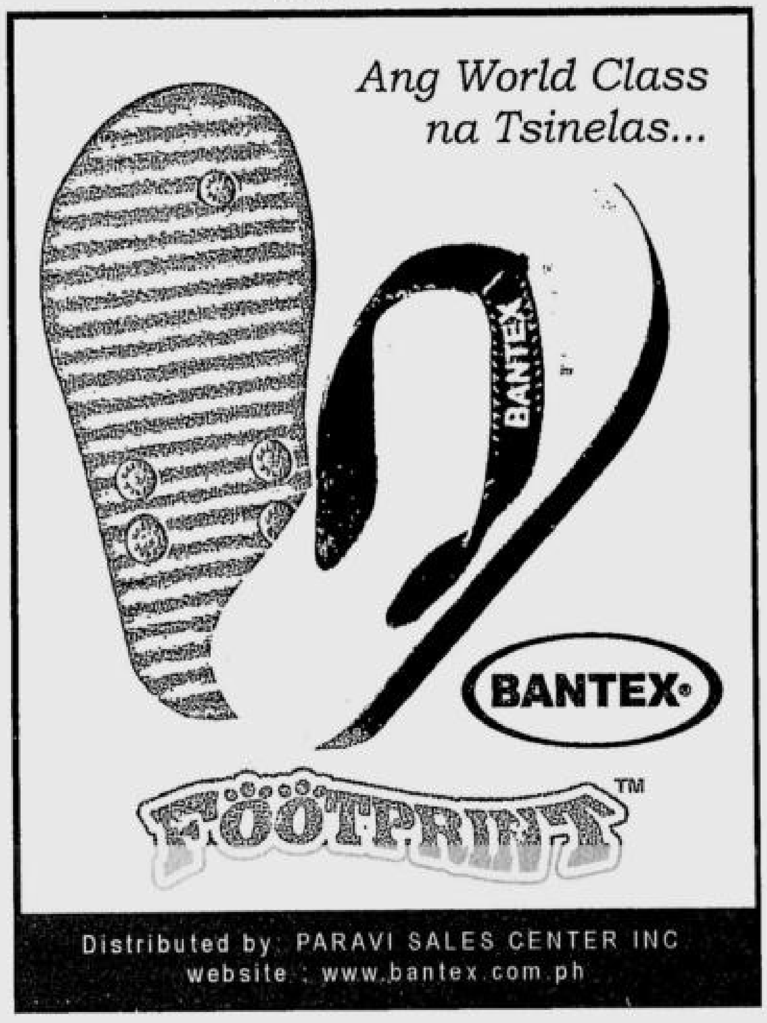
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By Dennis U. Eroa

PUERTO PRINCESA, Palawan—Josie Gabuco tries to give host Palawan something to crow about Friday night when she fights top seed Noemi Pe-Keng of Baguio City in the pinweight finals of the National Open amateur boxing championships here.

The 16-year-old Gabuco, youngest daughter of a tricyle driver and a market vendor, is the underdog when she trades punches with the rock-solid 4-foot-11 Pe-Keng, a member of the Philippine team and ranked No. 1 in the division.

"The whole of Palawan is behind Josie," said Palawan Gov. Joel T. Reyes. "Given the right exposure and training, Josie will go places."

Impressed with Gabuco's semifinal win over Pe-Keng's teammate Rodalla Flores, ABAP secretary-general Rene Fortaleza said Josie would be elevated to the national training pool.

Meanwhile, flyweight Ana Liza Cruz of Arena Fitness-QC entered the finals by stopping Jennifer Pe-Keng of Baguio City in the third round Thursday night.

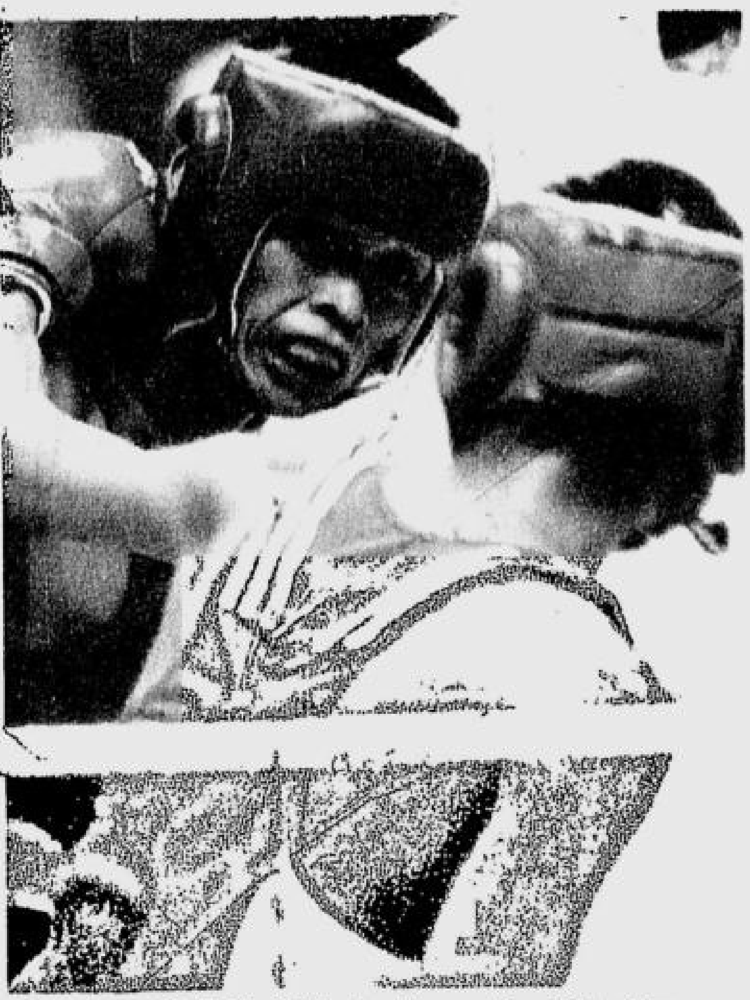
Mary Grace Tizon of Arena-QC also entered the lightflyweight finals by downing Gretchen Abaniel of Puerto Princesa City. She will dispute the gold with Asian Championships veteran Kate Aparri of Baguio City on Saturday.

In the men's division, defending overall champion Navy raised its number of semifinalists to nine as lightflyweight Franklin Alba and veteran lightweight Roel Laguna pulled through.

Alba beat Roberto Lerio of Cotabato Province, 55-47, while Laguna battered Rasul Alcid of Zamboanga City.

Laguna will dispute the gold medal against Cebu City's Cesar Amonsot, who stopped Reomer de la China of South Cotabato in the second round.

Top favorite Dick Varron, a semifinalist, proved to be overaged and was disqualified, derailing Air Force's bid to overhaul Navy in the overall race. Air Force lost another boxer when David Dalors of Puerto Princesa City stunned David Gopong, 91-78, to reach the welterweight semifinals.

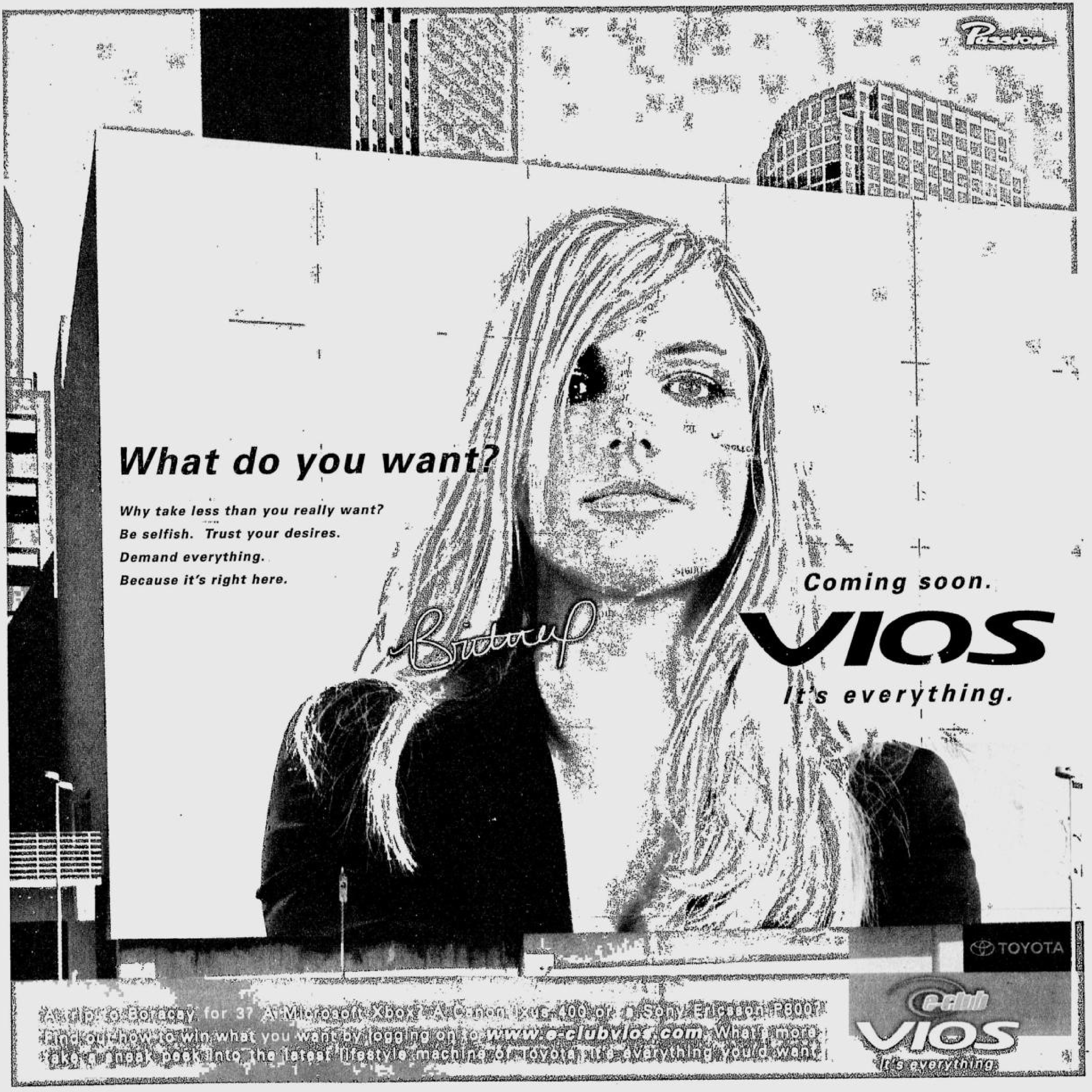


FRANKLIN Albia (left) of Philippine Navy avoids a left hook by Roberto Lerio of Cotabato during the quarterfinals of the National Open men and women amateur boxing championship. ROMY HOMILLADA

Army's Godfrey Castro and Jimmy Ambray of Puerto Princesa also entered the lightfly semis, beating Edmund Doronilla of South Cotabato and Ferdinand Candame of Dagupan City, respectively.

Flyweight Rey Belandres of Cotabato Province advanced to the semis with a 88-78 win over Junen Cantancio of the Philippine team. Airmen Wilbert Eballes dominated Anthony Marcial of Zamboanga City, 71-42 to make the bantamweight semis.

Also advancing was lightfly Nicolas Banal of Cebu City, a 75-41 winner over Dagupan City's Billy Quinto.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GSIS assets hit P246 B mark in 2002
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DOE warns of new power shortage

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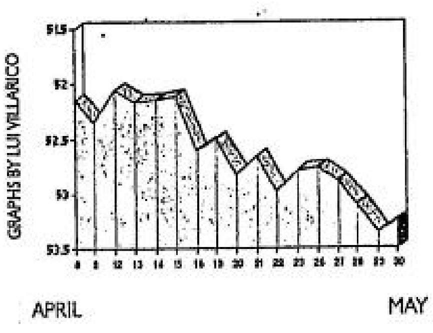

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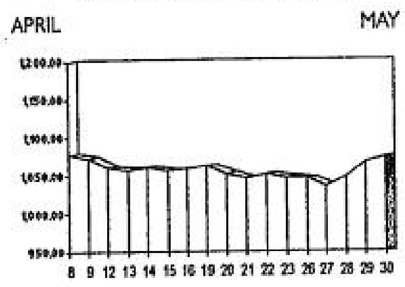
STOCK MARKET

Stocks end up on GDP news

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B2)

STOCKS ended higher yesterday as investors continued to cheer the strong year-on-year growth of the economy in the first quarter, analysts said.

Globe Telecom, the Philippines' second largest telephone firm, led gainers as it rose 3.39 percent or P20 to P610 as Fitch Ratings assigned a stable outlook for Globe given its strong product and competitive position.

Fitch also raised its outlook on PLDT, the country's largest telecommunications company, to stable from negative due to its successful debt reduction program.

The key index finished up for the third straight se ssion, closing 7.22 points or 0.68 percent higher at 1,073.69. The index has risen 5.43 percent so far this year.

"There was follow-through buying following the GDP news. Though there was a contraction compared to the fourth quarter of 2002, it did not impact on the market since the fourth quarter is always the best performing quarter," said AB Capital economic analyst Jose Vistan.

The government announced on Thursday that first quarter gross domestic product grew 4.5 percent from a year earlier, slower than the 5.8 percent growth seen in the final quarter of 2002, but higher than the 3.8 percent growth in January to March 2002.

"Though we can hardly feel the impact of the supposed economic growth, I don't feel we're receding. Investors are still hopeful the government can achieve its growth targets," Vistan said.

The market's value turnover rose 45 percent to P669.2 million from Thursday's P460.12 million.

Reuters

By Ronnel W. Domingo

A DRAMATIC increase in electricity consumption nationwide in the first quarter showed that supply reserves were dwindling and that a power crisis could come soon, according to the Department of Energy.

In a statement, Energy Secretary Vincent Perez Jr. reiterated calls to the private sector and other agencies to move faster in putting up additional power plants that were already planned.

Perez attributed the "rapid increase" in electricity demand to a stronger economy.

The official quoted data from the National Economic Development and Authority, which reported that the domestic economy grew by 4.5 percent in the first three months, higher than the projected 3.8 percent.

The state-owned National Power Corp. also reported earlier this month that its sales from January to March grew by 8.3 percent compared to figures for the same period in 2002.

"These figures are way beyond the Neda's growth scenario of 8 percent and the DOE's forecast of 7.9-percent annual growth in electricity demand for the whole country by 2006," Perez said.

The numbers also showed that power projects should be fast-tracked before another power crisis erupted, the official added.

He said that an additional 1,615 megawatts of generating capacity was needed in Luzon, 240 MW in the Visayas and 256 MW in Mindanao.

Perez said a power shortage could start as early as December this year on Panay Island, where demand is expected to go up to 220 MW by 2005 compared to the available capacity of 138 MW.

He noted that Napocor sales in the entire Visayas grid increased by 14 percent in the first quarter.

"There is really an urgent need to act now to avert this power crisis. Given the huge capital requirement, construction of additional power plants will largely be private sector initiatives," Perez said.

In a related development, Perez on Thursday hailed the Energy Regulatory Commission's approval of a new rate-making method for the transmission sector.

"The performance-based rate-making (PBR) methodology is a significant milestone in our electricity industry restructuring as it sets the guidelines on how investors in the transmission sector will recover reasonable returns," Perez said.

The PBR replaced the traditional return-on-rate base (RORB) method in setting charges. Under the PBR, the ERC would allow a maximum annual revenue cap pegged on the changes in the consumer price index, but adjusted for productivity and efficiency factors. The RORB method relied on a maximum 12-percent allowable return on assets used to provide a certain service.

ABS-CBN plans European broadcast starting August

By Elena R. Torrijos

ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp., largely owned by the Lopez family, is set to start broadcasting its shows in Europe this August through its overseas unit ABS-CBN Global Ltd.

The publicly listed broadcast giant aimed to boost its revenue from international operations by 30 percent to 40 percent this year, ABS-CBN chair and chief executive Eugenio Lopez III told reporters Thursday following the company's annual stockholders' meeting.

Lopez noted that Europe was an important market since there were more than a million Filipinos there.

"We are shooting for August. We are just completing negotiations with the satellite provider. Europe represents the last area that we have not penetrated," Lopez said.

He said the international unit was also hoping to broadcast in Canada this year.

At present, ABS-CBN Global operates a subscriber-based direct-to-home broadcast

ABS-CBN/B2

₱3.34-B INVESTMENT

Toyota expands RP operations

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

JAPANESE carmaker Toyota Motor Co. is pouring in P3.34 billion to expand and modernize its assembly plant and increase the output of its automotive parts exports.

Toyota has invested a total of P6.2 billion since it resumed its operations in the Philippines in 1989.

In a statement, Toyota Motor Philippines Corp. president Nobuharu Tabata said the planned investment fulfilled Toyota president Fujio Cho's commitment to increase the automotive giant's presence in the Philippines during the President's state visit to Japan in October last year.

Tabata said that P1.65 billion would be used to expand the common assembly line for the Corolla Altis, Camry and Toyota Revo and construct new facilities for employees at the Toyota Sta. Rosa Industrial Complex.

"The plant is envisioned to be the most modern local facility for the production of high-quality automobiles capable of simultaneous production of passenger cars and commercial vehicles and chassis frame for commercial vehicles," Tabata said.

Tabata said that P1.01 billion would be allocated for Toyota Autoparts Philippines Inc. (TAP) to jack up its production of transmission units for export to Japan for the assembly of commercial vehicles to be shipped out to China, Europe, Columbia, and Bangladesh.

Tabata said that the expansion of the transmission plant should boost TAP exports to $77 million a year—$62 million worth of G-type transmission and $15 million for constant velocity joints—by 2005. This would increase its total exports by 51 percent from current levels.

TAP produces 1.5 million units of G-type transmissions a year. These are used in the Revo, Hilux, Z-Ace, Hi-Ace, Kijang, Qualis, and Racer. It also churns outs 500,000 units of constant velocity joints, which control the rotating velocities of front-wheel drive models such as the Corolla, Coruna, Soluna, and Tercel.

Tabata said at least ₱679 million would be used to expand the operations of allied Toyota companies in the Sta. Rosa complex that supply other parts for local Toyota vehicles.

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SMC-Yamamura earmarks ₱1B for capacity build-up

By Elena R. Torrijos

SAN Miguel Yamamura Asia Corp., a joint venture between San Miguel Corp. and Nihon Yamamura Glass Co. Ltd. of Japan, will earmark about P1 billion to increase plant capacity and improve production efficiency.

In a statement, SMC said SMYAC would set aside P400 million for the construction of a fourth bottling forming line in its Cavite plant to bring up its capacity from 180 metric tons daily to 215 metric tons.

At the same time, SMYAC would also allocate P600 million to P700 million to rebuild its furnace and upgrade equipment in line with a program to improve production and operating efficiencies.

"These initiatives are seen to further boost the company's (SMYAC's) earnings performance this year, with 2002 established as its growth platform," SMC said.

SMYAC reported a net income of P237 million in 2002.

Strict cost management and more efficient operations led to a 6-percent increase in operating income to P280 million.

SMC noted that SMYAC's financial results for the first quarter of 2003 indicated better times to come.

The food and beverage conglomerate said SMYAC posted a 7-percent increase in revenue to P294 million while operating income reached P81 million.

SMYAC will continue to focus on product and market development.

"New ideas on quality, efficiencies and cost management will remain its base strategy to further the business' growth. Technical training and people development, particularly in new glass technologies, will likewise be pursued," SMC said.

Asian Spirit spending $50M to beef up fleet

ASIAN Spirit Airlines will embark on a $50-million five-year fleet modernization and route expansion program by the second semester of this year.

Asian Spirit Airlines chair Noel Oñate said the program called for the acquisition of five 68-seater British Aerospace ATP planes and two more 52-seater Canadian De Havilland Dash-7 aircraft. Also, its sales and marketing offices will be upgraded. The first two British Aerospace ATP aircraft will be purchased this June with the signing of the agreement governing the purchase to be held in London.

Asian Spirit is tapping the services of Land Bank of the Philippines to arrange the financial package for the aircraft acquisition.

Asian Spirit presently services 23 secondary local destinations, mostly on an exclusive basis. It was given a 25-year congressional franchise last January to operate both local and international air transport and cargo services.

With this program, Asian Spirit will be able to upgrade its existing fleet and double the number of routes it is servicing within the next five years.

GMA MEETS WITH TOP CONTRACTORS
President Macapagal met with top executives of potential prime contractors in the reconstruction of Iraq during a luncheon hosted by Maurice R. Greenberg (seated to her left) of AIG at the Waldorf Astoria Hotel in New York City. Those who attended the meeting were (standing from L to R) Joseph Ahearn of CH2M Hill Corp. (Bechtel), Ken Bauer of Railworks Corp., Charles Bacon of Bovis Lend Lease Holdings, Asif Shaikh of International Resources Group, Len Roadman of Black & Veatch and Larry Shaw from the Washington Group International, and (seated from L to R) James Thrash of Parsons Corp., Edward W. Phelan of DynCorp International, Derish Wolff of Louis Berger Group Inc. and Ronald Tutor of Perini Corp.

Incentives for shipping sector sought

By Abigail L. Ho

THE PHILIPPINE Inter-island Shipping Association (Pisa) is urging Congress to accelerate the passage of a maritime incentives law that will enable ship owners to devote more of their resources for the upgrading of their ships. This, it said, would help prevent future maritime disasters.

The umbrella organization of the domestic shipping sector appealed to the government to fast-track the passage of the Domestic Shipping Development Act that would not only create a more investment-friendly shipping industry but also provide local ship owners with certain incentives.

What ship owners would save because of the incentives could be used for the upgrading of their vessels.

The pending bill also provides for the creation of a "maritime bank" that will serve as a lender for ship owners who need affordable financing to fund the acquisition of newer and safer vessels.

Pisa added that the passage of the bill could lead to the modernization of the local shipping industry, including the eventual phase-out of wooden-hulled vessels and motorized bancas. These old-time vessels accounted for around 60 percent of the country's maritime fleet.

Despite the sea tragedy involving MV San Nicolas that left more than 30 people dead, Pisa president Doris Magsaysay-Ho assured the public that local ship owners always had the safety of their passengers and cargo as their top concern whenever a ship set sail.

She stressed that Pisa members complied with international safety regulations including the International Safety Management Code, the National Safety Management Code for vessels and the Standards of Training Certification Watchkeeping for seafarers.

"All these ensure that both our vessels and seafarers are at par with international standards in terms of ensuring safety of life at sea," she said in a statement yesterday.

Pisa members, she said, had invested in life-saving equipment like inflatable life rafts and the like to ensure safety even in the face of sea mishaps.

ABN AMRO gets derivatives permit

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE MONETARY Board of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas has approved the application of foreign bank ABN AMRO Commercial Bank for a derivatives license, Alberto Reyes, BSP deputy governor for bank supervision and examination, said.

Derivatives refer to financial instruments whose values are based on an underlying index like swaps, forwards, futures, options and warrants. These are usually used for hedging or covering certain financial risks.

Under BSP's regulations, only commercial banks and universal banks may apply for an expanded derivatives license. The licensee may trade, sell, deal and take positions in currency swap and forward of any tenor as well as all other derivatives for their own account or on behalf of customers.

A universal or commercial bank with no derivatives license is still allowed to trade, sell, deal and take positions for their own account or in behalf of customers in currency swaps and forwards with tenor of one year or less. It does not need a license if it is using the derivatives product as an end-user.

The BSP grants the derivatives license to banks which are able to prove their ability to:

- Account for currency exposures on a per currency basis through its Multi-Currency Subsidiary Ledger.
- Account for swaps and forwards either via the accrual or net present value basis.
- Manage and monitor price risks for the whole derivatives portfolio to ensure continuous assessment of the effectiveness of the hedge.

SEC OKs easing of bourse rule on delisting

LISTED companies no longer have to worry about delisting if the trading volume of their stocks does not meet the minimum requirement of the Philippine Stock Exchange.

The SEC last Thursday approved the proposed deletion of a PSE rule providing that a listed company could be delisted if the trading volume of its shares falls below the required level of the exchange.

"The commission believes that imposing a specific level of trading volume that should be maintained by a listed company might call for parties related to the company to unduly intervene in the trading of the shares by posting buying or selling orders just to meet the requirement," the SEC noted.

However, the commission did not agree to delete trading volume altogether as a criterion for delisting.

"The commission strongly feels that the exchange should maintain its option to delist a company if it had repeatedly failed to attract liquidity (traded volume) and/or enough interest (absence of bid and ask quotes) over a considerable period of time," the SEC added.

The commission, however, rejected the PSE's proposal to delete the provision prohibiting a listed company from changing the par value of its shares without prior approval of the exchange. *Elena R. Torrijos*

Insular Life '02 income up 24%

INSULAR Life posted a net income of P605 million for fiscal year 2002, up 24 percent over the previous year's level of P488 million.

Revenues reached P8.7 billion, 7 percent higher than the 2001 figure of P8.1 billion, with premium income accounting for P6.4 billion and investment income reaching P2 billion. The company breached the P1-billion mark in new life insurance business premiums, ending the year with P1.1 billion, a 36-percent increase over 2001's P810 million.

Insular Life chair Vicente R. Aylion, in his report to policyholders during the company's annual members' meeting, attributed the strong performance primarily to innovative products, renewed efforts at people and systems development for better customer servicing, and the shift in the company's investments to fixed-income instruments.

Ayllon reported that the total consolidated assets of the Insular Life Group reached P34.3 billion, up by 10 percent compared with 2001's P 31.1 billion.

Total benefits paid to both life and non-life policyholders grew 11 percent to P3.2 billion.

ABS-CBN plans European ...

From page B1

service in North America and the Middle East and some territories in Asia.

Last year, ABS-CBN Global registered P1.91 billion in revenue or 36.3 percent higher than the previous year's P1.4 billion.

Its subscribers grew 14 percent to 148,925 worldwide of which 72 percent were subscribers of The Filipino Channel in North America.

Meanwhile, ABS-CBN stockholders approved on Thursday the change in the company's corporate purpose to allow it to engage in real estate development.

The move paves the way for the broadcast firm to seek the classification of its 15-story, P6-billion head office building in Quezon City as an information technology zone under the Philippine Economic Zone Authority.

The classification would enable the company to attract IT locators to the building, which is currently only half occupied.

Lopez said the company has been holding negotiations with two call centers to lease the building's 5th to 7th floors.

INTEREST RATES

May 30, 2003-MART1 Rates

Benchmark Interest Rates	MART1 30-May-03 (%)	MART1 29-May-03 (%)
1 Month	7.2116	7.1500
3 Months	7.1731	7.1346
6 Months	7.6865	7.6692
1 Year	8.2135	8.2271
2 Years	8.8577	8.8769
3 Years	9.7385	9.7481
4 Years	10.3519	10.3542
5 Years	10.7827	10.8019
7 Years	11.3173	11.3292
10 Years	11.5366	11.5211
20 Years	12.0841	12.0704
25 Years	12.5769	12.6250

SOURCE: MART/BLOOMBERG

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of Friday, May 30, 2003)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	3.95	3.95	3.95	3.95	3,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	15.25	16.25	15.25	16.25	335,800
Bank of the Phil. Islands	37	38.5	37	37	697,500
China Banking Corp.	700	700	700	700	1,310
Citystate Savings Bank	14.5	14.5	14.5	14.5	2,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	25	25	23.75	23.75	326,400
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	26.5	26.5	25.5	25.5	1,486,800
Philippine National Bank	20.5	20.5	19	19	459,600
Phil. Savings Bank	28	28	28	28	1,000
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	5,000
Security Bank Corp.	10	10	10	10	123,000
Union Bank of the Phil.	17.5	17.75	17.5	17.5	21,500
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Bankard Inc.	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	294,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	1420	1420	1420	1420	800
Sun Life Financial Serv.	1050	1050	1050	1050	1,080
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp	13.75	13.75	13	13	8,000
Digital Telecom Phils Inc	0.73	0.73	0.71	0.72	4,300,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	600	615	595	610	207,700
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.04	0.04	0.038	0.039	4,400,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.018	0.018	0.018	0.018	2,000,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	2.7	2.75	2.7	2.75	20,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	0.31	0.31	0.3	0.3	1,260,000
Phil. Telegraph & Tel. Co.	0.25	0.25	0.24	0.24	140,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	432.5	437.5	432.5	432.5	241,940
Ivantage Corp.	0.39	0.4	0.39	0.39	450,000
Philweb Corp.	0.012	0.012	0.011	0.011	14,400,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	6.1	6.1	6	6	283,000
Manila Electric Co. B	9.1	9.1	8.9	8.9	499,000
Petron Corp.	1.84	1.84	1.8	1.8	4,934,000
Trans-Asia Oil And Energy	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	300,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.58	1.6	1.56	1.56	770,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	2.44	2.46	2.44	2.46	129,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.43	0.43	0.43	0.43	20,000
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp.	1.58	1.58	1.58	1.58	30,000
Union Cement Corp.	0.74	0.75	0.74	0.75	1,330,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	2.55	2.6	2.55	2.6	81,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	25.5	26	25.5	26	129,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	16.25	16.5	16.25	16.25	2,947,100
RFM Corp.	0.68	0.68	0.67	0.67	130,000
San Miguel Corp. A	54	55	53.5	55	382,600
San Miguel Corp. B	63.5	63.5	63	63.5	605,900
Universal Robina Corp.	4.1	4.1	4.05	4.1	3,158,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	100,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Ayala Corp.	4.2	4.35	4.2	4.35	8,424,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	.0250	0.025	0.024	0.024	4,200,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	1.88	1.88	1.86	1.88	385,000
Balabac Resources & Hldgs.	.1400	0.14	0.14	0.14	20,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	.2700	0.29	0.27	0.28	21,870,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	.2000	0.2	0.19	0.195	700,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.04	1.04	1.04	1.04	50,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp	7.5	7.5	7.5	7.5	613,000
Forum Pacific Inc.	.1800	0.18	0.18	0.18	20,000
Keppel Holdings B	7600	0.76	0.76	0.76	40,000
Megaworld Corp.	5600	0.56	0.54	0.56	3,730,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	.1750	0.175	0.165	0.165	1,540,000
Music Corp.	2900	0.29	0.29	0.29	500,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	.8400	0.84	0.84	0.84	270,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	.2600	0.26	0.26	0.26	550,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Cen Azucar de Tarlac	1.34	1.34	1.34	1.34	4,000
Interphil Labs Inc. A	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	70,000
Matsushita Elec Phil Corp	6.8	6.8	6.8	6.8	4,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	1.68	1.74	1.68	1.74	200,000
Pryce Corp.	1150	0.115	0.115	0.115	2,400,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	16.75	16.75	16.5	16.5	46,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	.4100	0.43	0.41	0.43	8,020,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	.3100	0.35	0.31	0.32	440,000
Manila Jockey Club	8	8	8	8	46,000
Mondragon Intl Phils, Inc.	.2300	0.23	0.23	0.23	300,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	.3500	0.4	0.35	0.4	1,140,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp (Pdr)	13.75	14	13	13	281,200
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Z	10	10	10	10	1,000
WGA - Preferred	4.75	4.75	4.75	4.75	1,000
OTHERS					
Centro Escolar University	5	5	5	5	312,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	4.95	5	4.95	5	14,964,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	30,000
EIB Realty Developers Inc.	0.185	0.185	0.18	0.18	210,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.155	0.16	0.155	0.16	1,500,000
Edsa Prop. Holdings Inc.	0.59	0.59	0.59	0.59	50,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	0.83	0.84	0.83	0.83	20,050,000
Highlands Prime Inc.	2.12	2.14	2.12	2.14	100,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05	1,100,000
SM Development Corp.	1.1	1.12	1.1	1.12	300,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	4.8	4.8	4.7	4.8	9,667,000
MINING					
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.003	0.003	0.003	0.003	7,000,000
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	4,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.195	0.2	0.195	0.2	500,000
Omico Corp.	0.0040	.004	.0038	.0038	12,000,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	5,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0026	0.0026	0.0026	0.0026	23,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0026	0.0026	0.0026	0.0026	5,000,000
Pacifica	0.009	0.009	0.009	0.009	1,000,000

DISCLOSURES

JOLLIBEE Foods Corp. bought on Thursday 59,800 of its shares worth P961,800 in line with its stock repurchase program.

* * *

PRUDENTIAL Bank elected the following officers: Jose Santos, chair; Francisco Delgado, vice chair, and Felipe Gella, corporate secretary.

* * *

CESAR Virata was elected chair of Bankard Inc. along with Joven Reyes, president and CEO; lawyer Marcelo Dy, corporate secretary; Oscar Blason, SVP and COO, and Elizabeth Legarda, SVP.

* * *

PRIMETOWN Property Group Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on July 19, 2 p.m., at the Skylounge, Citadel Inn, Makati.

* * *

THE ANNUAL stockholders' meeting of United Paragon Mining Corp. will be held on Sept. 5, 10 a.m. at its principal office.

* * *

PHILWEB Corp. elected the following officers: Roberto Ongpin, chair; Jaime Gonzalez, vice chair; Alex Villamar, president; Roberto Valdez, treasurer, and Roberto San Jose, corporate secretary.

* * *

ELECTED to the board of ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp. were Federico Garcia, Peter Garrucho, Vicente Jayme, Augusto Almeda Lopez, Eugenio Lopez III, Manuel Lopez, Manuel Lopez Jr., Oscar Lopez, Federico Lopez, Roberto de Ocampo and Presentacion Psinakis.

* * *

PICOP Resources will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on June 25, 2:30 p.m., at the Makati Sports Club, Salcedo Village, Makati City. ***Compiled by Armin Adina, PDI Research***

CURRENCIES

May 30, 2003 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.840054	1.000000	53.282000
Japan	Yen	0.007110	0.008464	0.451000
United Kingdom	Pound	1.388693	1.653100	88.080500
Hongkong	Dollar	0.107725	0.128236	6.832700
Switzerland	Franc	0.654451	0.779059	41.509800
Canada	Dollar	0.613716	0.730567	38.926100
Singapore	Dollar	0.486988	0.579710	30.888100
Australia	Dollar	0.544006	0.647585	34.504600
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.228378	2.652661	141.339100
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.224009	0.266660	14.208200
Brunei	Dollar	0.485580	0.578035	30.798900
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000101	0.000120	0.006400
Thailand	Baht	0.020112	0.023941	1.275600
UAE	Dirham	0.228729	0.272279	14.507600
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.190400	63.426900
Argentina	Peso	0.291685	0.347222	18.500700
Brazil	REAL	0.285538	0.339905	18.110800
Denmark	Kroner	0.134505	0.160115	8.531200
India	Rupee	0.017892	0.021299	1.134900
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.221096	0.263193	14.023400
Mexico	New Peso	0.081503	0.097021	5.169500
New Zealand	Dollar	0.483290	0.575308	30.653600
Norway	Kroner	0.126783	0.150923	8.041500
Pakistan	Rupee	0.014622	0.017406	0.927400
South Africa	Rand	0.103869	0.123646	6.588100
Korea	Won	0.000696	0.000829	0.044200
Sweden	Kroner	0.109170	0.129956	6.924300
Syria	Pound	0.020002	0.023810	1.268600
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.024244	0.028860	1.537700
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000527	0.000627	0.033400

Japan's unemployment rate nears record high

TOKYO—Japan's economic woes were highlighted again in a series of economic data released Friday, with the latest jobless rate staying near record high levels as deflation lingered on.

Japan's jobless rate in April was 5.4 percent, unchanged from March, though the number of unemployed workers rose 100,000 from the previous year to 3.85 million people, the government said Friday.

The unemployment rate's historic high is 5.5 percent.

The jobless rate for men fell to 5.6 percent from 5.7 percent in March while that for women rose to 5.1 percent from 4.8 percent, the Ministry of Public Management, Home Affairs, Posts and Telecommunications said.

"The continued high level of unemployment demonstrates that overall labor conditions remained challenging," a ministry official said.

Adding to the gloom overshadowing the Japanese economic landscape, salaried household spending in April fell 1 percent year-on-year, marking seven straight months of decline, the home affairs ministry said.

Wage income fell 2.6 percent year-on-year, while disposable income was down 0.6 percent, it said.

Deflation continued to haunt Japan, with national consumer prices in April falling 0.1 percent year-on-year, as they have fallen for the past three years and eight months, the ministry said.

Excluding volatile fresh food prices, core consumer prices in April fell 0.4 percent year-on-year. This data also has fallen for the past three years and seven months.

"Overall, the data reconfirmed that the Japanese economy is in a serious situation," said Masashi Murata, economist at UFJ Institute.

"The unemployment rate is staying at a high level. The spending data might get worse because auto sales are expected to slow down in May and June, though it had been one of the main driving forces preventing a sharp fall in consumption," Murata said.

"Deflation is hurting corporate earnings but it was at least providing support for the spending figures," he said.

Japan is likely to continue to suffer from lingering deflation with domestic demand remaining extremely weak while supply stays strong, Murata added.

Despite the depressing figures, some positive developments were seen in the April jobs data as the number of laid-off workers fell 90,000 year-on-year to 1.12 million, economists said.

As further evidence of a modest improvement, the number of unemployed household owners fell by 80,000 year-on-year in April.

"A bad thing is that many people left the job market after giving up on looking for jobs but a good thing is that restructuring by manufacturers seems to have ended or at least it looks like ending soon," said Tatsuya Torikoshi, economist at Daiwa Institute of Research.

"New jobs are being created in the services, medical and welfare sectors," he said.

Mis-matching of job skills is still a significant problem as many older workers leave the manufacturing sectors and join the medical, welfare and services sectors, Torikoshi said. *AFP*

Asian stocks rally

SINGAPORE—Asian stocks scrambled to multi-month peaks on Friday after hopes for a US economic recovery shoved the Nasdaq Composite Index to a near-one-year high on Wall Street.

Tokyo's Nikkei stock average touched its highest levels since early March before ending morning trade up just over half a percent at 8.422.64.

Other Asian stock markets also gained, propelling the broad MSCI Asia Pacific Free Index Ex-Japan as much as 0.9 percent higher to a nine-month peak.

"The Tokyo market is playing catch-up to New York, as its gains have been lagging, particularly from a valuations standpoint," said Hiroshi Sato, general manager at the Cosmo Securities' equity department.

Toshiba Corp. and other tech shares led the rise in Tokyo after the Nasdaq rose three-quarters of a percent, its fifth straight gain, to 1,574.95, its highest close in nearly a year. Toshiba, Japan's largest chip maker, rose 3.4 percent.

Other Asian markets booked small gains, with enthusiasm constrained by a 0.9 percent fall in the Dow Jones Industrial Average to 8,711.18.

Share benchmarks had risen 0.2 percent in Australia, 0.5 percent in Taiwan and 0.6 percent in Singapore. Hong Kong was 0.3 percent lower ahead of first-quarter economic data and South Korea was flat. *Reuters*

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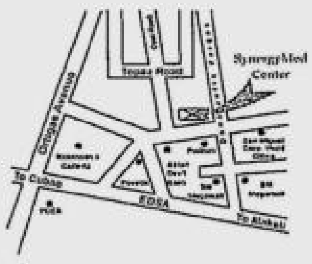

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4,500 kms, P1,875,000
Now P1,800,000

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2002, Silver,
4,500 kms, P1,875,000
Now P1,800,000

BMW 318i M Sport
2002, Titanium Silver,
8,400 kms, P2,050,000
Now P1,800,000

BMW 325i Exec.
2002, Green,
9,688 kms, P2,400,000
Now P2,280,000

BMW 325i Lt. Ed.
2002, Black Sapphire,
10,447 kms, P2,400,000
Now P2,280,000

BMW 325i Exec.
2002, Titanium Silver,
6,214 kms, P2,450,000
Now P2,350,000

BMW 316i 2002, Steel Gray,
6,000 kms, P1,400,000
Now P1,350,000

BMW 316i 2002, Titanium Silver,
5,000 kms, P1,450,000
Now P1,400,000

BMW 318i 2002, Alpine White,
2,000 kms, P1,815,000
Now P1,750,000

BMW 318i Exec.
2002, Titanium Silver,
10,000 kms, P1,950,000
Now P1,885,000

BMW 330d 2001, Black Sapphire,
13,000 kms, P2,400,000
Now P2,275,000

BMW 525i Exec.
2002, Blue Water,
6,000 kms, P2,900,000
Now P2,850,000

Other cars available:

BMW 316i 1995, Boston Green,
48,000 kms, P650,000
Now P600,000

BMW 316i 1997, Boston Green,
33,000 kms, P700,000
Now P660,000

BMW 320i 1994, Arktis Silver,
60,000 kms, P750,000
Now P690,000

BMW 316i 1998, Arktis Silver,
55,000 kms, P780,000
Now P720,000

BMW 320i 1998, Calypso Red,
50,000 kms, P850,000
Now P820,000

BMW 523i 1997, Canyon Red,
40,000 kms, P1,550,000
Now P1,500,000

BMW 520i 1999, Alpine White,
29,000 kms, P1,750,000
Now P1,700,000

BMW 520i 1999, Aspen Silver,
21,000 kms, P1,850,000
Now P1,750,000

BMW 320d 2001, Titanium Silver,
13,000 kms, P1,645,000
Now P1,595,000

BMW 323i 2000, Alpine White,
18,000 kms, P1,825,000
Now P1,775,000

Other cars available:

BMW 316i 1996, Boston Green,
40,000 kms, P700,000
Now P685,000

BMW 316i 1997, Alpine White,
47,000 kms, P725,000
Now P710,000

BMW 316i 1998, Cosmos Black,
32,000 kms, P810,000
Now P790,000

BMW 320i 1996, Cosmos Black,
85,000 kms, P850,000
Now P835,000

BMW 318tds 1996, Titanium Silver,
50,000 kms, P900,000
Now P875,000

BMW 316i 2002, Titanium Silver,
20,000 kms, P1,400,000
Now P1,375,000

BMW 725tds 1997, Orient Blue,
74,000 kms, P1,850,000
Now P1,800,000

BMW 318i Limousine
2002, Titanium Silver,
11,000 kms, P1,830,000
Now P1,810,000

BMW 318i Limousine
2002, Orient Blue,
6,000 kms, P1,870,000
Now P1,850,000

BMW 318i Executive
2001, Black Sapphire,
20,000 kms, P1,875,000
Now P1,850,000

BMW 318i Limousine
2002, Black Sapphire,
5,000 kms, P1,890,000
Now P1,870,000

BMW 318i Exec.
2002, Titanium Silver,
15,000 kms, P1,950,000
Now P1,900,000

BMW 325i 2002, Sienna Red,
9,000 kms, P2,390,000
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BMW 325i 2002, Titanium Silver,
13,000 kms, P2,450,000
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BMW 525i 2002, Titanium Silver,
15,000 kms, P2,825,000
Now P2,775,000

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Tel. (02) 892 8127
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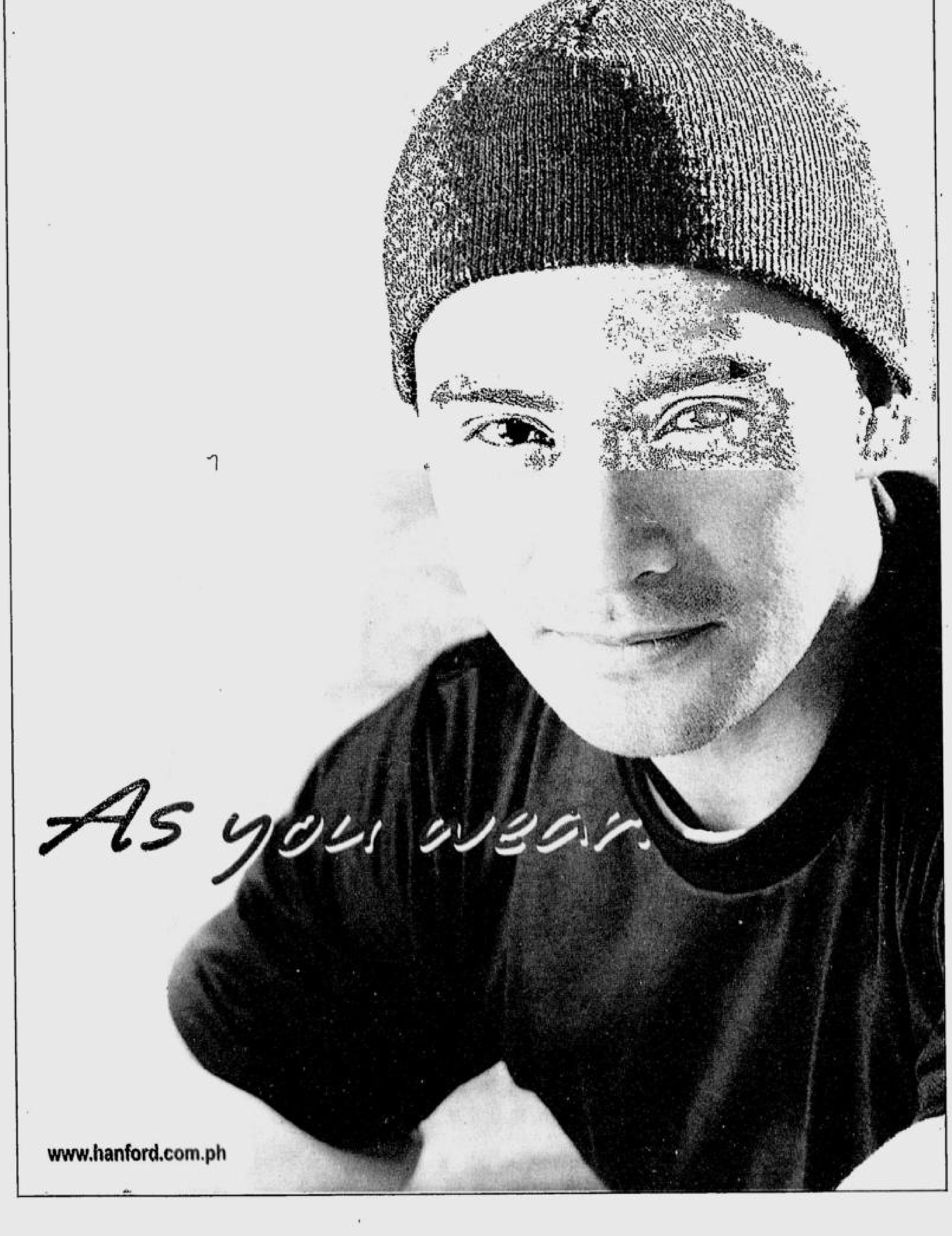

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Opens Today

31 May 2003 • 2:00 PM
POEA Building, Mandaluyong City

H. E. President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo

Guest of Honor

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ong Gloria Macapag

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- Issuance/renewal of Seafarer Identity & Record Book (SIRB)
- Information updates, registration for membership & similar services

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Department of Foreign Affairs
National Statistics Office
National Bureau of Investigation
National Telecommunications Commission
Professional Regulation Commission
Commission on Higher Education
Philippine Overseas Employment Administration
Technical Employment & Skills Development Authority
Maritime Training Council - National Assessment Center
Maritime Industry Authority
Overseas Workers Welfare Administration
Social Security System
Philippine Health Insurance
Home Mutual Development Fund

Philippine Seafarers' One-stop Center
12B
14
NSO
NSO

PROGRAMME

Arrival of **H.E. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo**
President of the Republic of the Philippines

Ribbon Cutting

Tour of the PSOC Facilities

Welcome Address
Hon. Patricia A. Sto. Tomas
Secretary of Labor and Employment

Testimonials

Awarding of Benefits

Refreshments

Dir. Ramon T. Tionloc, Jr.
Master of Ceremonies

Philippine Seafarers' One-stop Center (PSOC)

Ground Floor, POEA Bldg., corner EDSA and Ortigas Avenue, Mandaluyong City

Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA)
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E-mail: maritime_poea@hotmail.com

Maritime Training Council (MTC)
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Website: www.mtc.gov.ph E-mail: info@mtc.gov.ph

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What tobacco ads won't tell you

By Tessa R. Salazar

SMOKERS are cool. Smoking can make a person look glamorous, powerful, sexy, sophisticated and successful. That's the advertising world's version of smokers and smoking.

But here's the doctors' version: Smoking adds 12 years to a smoker's age and causes bad breath, ugly fingernails, premature wrinkles (particularly around the lips) and corrupted taste buds. The advertising world will never depict smokers as fragile and sickly. The Marlboro Man will always look tough and healthy.

Effects of smoking

A closer look at the effects of smoking can make one cringe.

Among men, exposure to cigarette smoke causes impotence because blood flow in the sex organs is impeded. Among women, it causes infertility.

A pregnant woman exposed to secondhand smoke increases her chances of having a miscarriage or bearing a physically or mentally deficient baby.

Dr. Jessica de Leon, point person for the Department of Health's Tobacco Control Advocacy, said smoking is also being blamed for the increasing cases of the sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS), or crib death.

FILIPINO smokers are getting younger and younger. PDI PHOTO

Every six seconds, one person in the world dies of smoking.

It is estimated that by 2020, tobacco-related diseases will be the world's largest single health problem, causing an estimated 8.4 million deaths annually.

More deaths

Deaths in the developed world are expected to increase from 1.6 million to 2.4 million annually, while those in Asia are seen to quadruple by 2020 to 4.2 million from 1.1 million in 1990.

In the Philippines, where 34 percent are smokers and 13 percentA are ex-smokers, two to three Filipinos die of smoking-related causes every hour.

And in 10 to 15 years, it is estimated that five Filipinos will be dying of tobacco-related causes every hour.

The remaining 53 percent nonsmoking Filipinos can fall victim to tobacco smoke through passive smoking. People exposed to secondhand smoke are prone to heart disease, stroke, lung cancer and chronic obstructive lung diseases as much as, if not more than, smokers themselves.

"If you are a (passive) smoker, you might be more vulnerable to illness than a firsthand smoker," De Leon said.

Young puffers

De Leon said more and more children are smoking, and at an earlier age.

In the past, she said, the average age of child smokers was 12 years and the age of initiation was around 10 or 11.

"Now kids as young as 7 start smoking," she said.

A 1991 survey revealed that 28 percent of the country's young population started smoking between the ages of 14 and 17.

Quit early

But smokers need not lose hope. Experts say smokers who quit the habit before the age of 50 reduce their risk of dying in the next 15 years by half compared to those who continue to smoke.

"Better late than never," said pulmonologist Dr. Encarnita C. Blanco-Limpin, president of the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control Alliance Philippines.

"Quitting smoking or increasing physical activity even at a late age can significantly reduce a person's risk of heart disease," said Limpin, who also chairs the Philippine College of Chest Physicians' Council on Tobacco Health and Air Pollution.

De Leon said there is a correlation between office workers' exposure to cigarette smoke and their absences and loss of productivity.

"These would be employees suffering from asthma, cough and colds. These are just some of the milder contributors to the loss of productivity," she said.

Germany funds RP initiative vs COPD

THE PUBLIC Private Partnership program of the Federal German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (DEG) is co-financing the COPD Support Team Project of Boehringer Ingelheim (Phils.) Inc. to fight the "smoker's disease" known as chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). Boehringer Ingelheim said the project strengthens its commitment to prevent the spread of COPD and provide better care for COPD patients.

Pervasive air pollution and prevalent smoking in the Philippines have become alarming health hazards for its populace. Among serious respiratory diseases they cause, COPD is one of the most threatening.

7th leading cause of death

In fact, the World Health Organization has revealed that COPD ranks seventh among the leading causes of death worldwide. By 2020, WHO projects that COPD will rank fourth in the list of leading causes of diseases in developing countries like the Philippines.

Addressing the COPD problem in the Philippines requires considerable improvements in its early detection and diagnosis. There is a need to raise public awareness on COPD and medical practitioners have to be trained on its proper diagnosis, such as differentiating it from asthma which exhibits similar symptoms, and providing them with adequate diagnostic tools.

Under the PPP program, 30 trained respiratory therapists with mobile spirometry equipment will be assigned to 750 general practitioners to diagnose up to 65,000 COPD-suspected patients in the country in the next two years.

Information dissemination

COPD education is another core activity of the project. Patients will receive counseling on the nature and proper management of their disease, while physicians will be given lectures on proper diagnosis and treatment of COPD. A massive media campaign will be mounted to reach the provinces.

The project also supports government policies in fighting COPD and is expected to significantly improve the management of the disease through more cost-effective treatment.

DEG contributed 200,000 euro, or 22 percent of the total expense of the project.

Breastfeeding may counter harm caused by maternal smoking

LONDON—Breastfeeding may counter the harmful effects that smoking during pregnancy can cause to a baby's development, Dutch researchers said last Thursday.

Scientists at the University of Groningen in the Netherlands studied school results of 570 9-year-old children who had been born in a Dutch hospital between 1975 and 1978 and whose mother had smoked during the pregnancy.

They found that only children who had been bottle-fed performed poorly on the school tests.

"Our results indicate that negative effects of maternal smoking on children's cognitive performance were limited to those who had not been breastfed," Dr. Laura Batstra said in a report in the Journal of Epidemiology and Community Health.

Batstra and her colleagues said psychological or other factors could be involved but suggested that ingredients in breastmilk may promote brain development and counteract the negative effects of maternal smoking.

"This notion has important practical implications, especially for nicotine-addicted future mothers," Batstra said.

"Apart from helping these mothers stop or diminish their tobacco consumption, they should be encouraged ,to breastfeed," she added.

Medical studies have shown that breastfeeding offers tremendous benefits for babies. It reduces their risk of ear infections, allergies, vomiting and diarrhea.

Norwegian scientists have also found a positive association between the duration of breastfeeding and the child's mental development.

The longer the child was breastfed, the greater the benefit, even after adjusting for maternal age, education, intelligence and smoking at the time of conception.

Reuters

UN states adopt world's first antismoking agreement

THE 192 member-countries of the World Health Organization last week adopted the world's first antismoking treaty aimed at breaking a habit that kills nearly five million people every year.

The following are highlights from the 38-article treaty.

Preamble. The treaty expresses serious concern at the increase in the worldwide consumption and production of cigarettes and other tobacco products, particularly in developing countries.

It recognizes that scientific evidence has shown that tobacco consumption and exposure to tobacco smoke cause death, disease and disability and that cigarettes and some other tobacco products are highly engineered to create and maintain dependence.

Prices and taxes. Although it does not call for outright increases, it says tax and pricing policies should "contribute to the reduction of tobacco consumption." Duty-free sales should be banned or restricted.

Secondhand smoke. States should take steps to protect people from exposure to tobacco smoke in indoor workplaces, public transport and indoor public places.

Labeling. Within three years, all states should ensure that packaging and labeling do not create the "false impression" that certain products are less harmful. Such labeling "may" include terms like "light" or "mild." Health warnings should cover no less than 30 percent of a pack.

Advertising. Provided that their constitutions allow it, states should ban tobacco advertising, promotion and sponsorship, including cross-border publicity, within five years. Countries that cannot impose bans due to constitutional reasons should impose restrictions.

Sales to minors. This must be banned and vending machines must not be accessible to minors.

Liability. States should adopt laws dealing with "criminal and civil liability, including compensation where appropriate" and should exchange information on their laws and judicial actions.

Funding. States should cooperate to raise financial resources for effective implementation of the convention through bilateral and multilateral funding mechanisms.

Reuters

SMOKERS HAVE POORER MEMORIES PHOTO: REUTERS

RESEARCHERS tracking the health of almost 2,000 British adults found heavy smokers had poorer memories in middle age. Tests suggest that heavy smokers who survive smoking's bigger threats—lung cancer and heart disease—may be at risk of serious cognitive decline.

AP

Silver screen a smokescreen, says WHO

THE WORLD Health Organization has urged the film and fashion industries to stop promoting tobacco use, warning that smoking is set to become the single biggest cause of disease in the Asia-Pacific region.

The WHO, which is marking World No Tobacco Day today, is calling for tobacco-free films and fashion.

The WHO said the film and fashion industries were both significantly fostering the use of tobacco, either directly or indirectly, through actors smoking on films, sponsorships of fashion shows and fashion accessories bearing tobacco names. Moreover, some tobacco companies pay for product placement in movies.

Studies show that the likelihood of young people trying out cigarettes more than doubles when they are frequently exposed to movies where actors smoke.

Every day, some 40,000 to 50,000 Asian teens take up smoking.

Currently, the majority of Hollywood and Bollywood blockbusters dramatize smoking.

According to the University of California in San Francisco, which has a website on smoke-free movies, nine in 10 Hollywood movies dramatize tobacco. Also, 28 percent of films, and one in five children's movies, show a cigarette logo or brand name.

Researchers from that university also found that Marlboros have been featured in at least 28 of Hollywood's top-grossing movies in the past 10 years, the WHO said.

A recent WHO study of Indian films showed that 80 percent depicted tobacco use.

"This is a very worrying trend which urgently needs to be reversed," said Dr. Shigeru Omi, regional director of WHO's Western Pacific Region, which covers East Asia and the Pacific.

"Half of all smokers eventually die from their habit, yet we still see smoking being promoted as glamorous, 'cool' or macho."

A typical American adolescent who watches 150 films a year will be exposed to about 800 depictions of smoking, a study from the US Dartmouth Medical School found. Moreover, children's access to films is increasing rapidly with the proliferation of satellite and home movie channels.

"In many films, we see heroes, who may be idols for teenagers, smoking. Is this the right image to promote to the young? This goes against all the work done by some countries, such as Singapore, in restricting tobacco advertising," Omi said.

Omi said the region should take note of this issue, given its sizeable young population and soaring smoking rates.

At present, the WHO's Western Pacific Region has the highest smoking rate in the world, with nearly two-thirds of men smoking.

With growing restrictions on tobacco advertising, tobacco companies now have fewer settings to promote their products. The film and fashion industries hold particular appeal, as image is a key reason people take up smoking.

The WHO has called on the film industry to do the following:

- Certify that no one involved with film production receives any payoffs for depicting smoking.
- Run strong antitobacco advertising before films with tobacco use.
- Stop identifying tobacco brands in movie scenes.
- Implement a rating system for films that depict smoking.

When to yell 'Cut!'

DISCOVER

Massie Santos Ballon

I USED to read stories about how, in the summer, young adolescent boys in the barrios would go to the river and get circumcised by the *albularyo* who used a sharp sliver of bamboo.

The boys would clean up afterward, apply a poultice of guava leaves to ease the pain, and walk bow-legged in skirts for the next few days until they healed.

Apparently, it was a rite of passage into manhood, although I had always wondered why they were never circumcised as babies in hospitals.

It seems, however, that not all hospitals consider this procedure routine anymore.

Dr. Reynaldo Joson, chief of surgery at the Ospital ng Maynila, has spent the past few years calling for an end to routine circumcision, claiming it causes unnecessary pain to males.

"I couldn't see the medical benefit or usefulness of the procedure," he said in an e-mail. "It was really more of a ritual or tradition."

Mindset

He advocates his cause both face-to-face and via his website, http://xtulepinoy.tripod.com.

After 15 years of performing circumcisions, Dr. Joson started suggesting that people not have their sons circumcised. He says people are usually surprised when he offers them an option.

"What?" they ask him, "*Hindi na kailangan? Bakit?*"

"This is the most common reaction in practically all people when I start telling them the option of not having their boys circumcised," he says. "This is the mindset. All of them think all boys should be circumcised."

Last year his hospital joined the cause, announcing that their doctors would only perform circumcisions if it was necessary to ensure the patient's well-being.

They're not alone. In 1999 the American Association of Pediatrics passed a resolution saying routine circumcision was unnecessary because it has been found to have none of the medical benefits long associated with the procedure. A few years before that, Australia and the UK had passed similar resolutions.

Advantages

What exactly are these medical benefits? I note here that results of any medical study can be interpreted to favor one's own opinion.

In the 1860s doctors in the United States started performing circumcisions as a way of preventing boys from masturbating. (I don't think there's a circumcised boy out there who can say that did them any good.)

In the early 1980s, people believed that removing the tip of the foreskin made males less likely to contract sexually transmitted diseases like AIDS, and also lowered the chances of contracting penile cancer.

It was also believed that uncircumcised males were more likely than circumcised males to get urinary tract infections, although critics of routine circumcision point out that uncircumcised males just have to wash themselves more thoroughly to prevent that problem. They also argue that circumcision can cause disfigurement in some cases, and reduce sensation.

Why the practice?

If routine circumcision has no medical benefits then why have people been getting circumcised all this time?

For some, it's simply because God said so in the Old Testament.

In Jewish custom, circumcision is part of the bris, a ceremony similar to Christian baptism and marks the child's covenant with God.

Christian theology, however, seems vague on whether or not it is required. Apparently the early Christians (think around the time of the apostles, I'd guess) decided that if they weren't Jewish converts, they didn't have to get circumcised. Many European Christians aren't circumcised.

I'm not sure if circumcision in Philippine hospitals is a routine procedure picked up from the West or if it started as a tribal rite of passage, but either way it is safe to say the procedure has deeper meaning for some but not for others.

Points to consider

So should routine circumcision be stopped?

I think parents should ask themselves why they want their son circumcised, and if they decide to have the procedure done for family and/or religious reasons, they shouldn't be made to feel guilty for whatever they decide.

If they really believe their son will hate them in 13 years or more for choosing on his behalf, then maybe they should hold off until he's old enough to decide for himself.

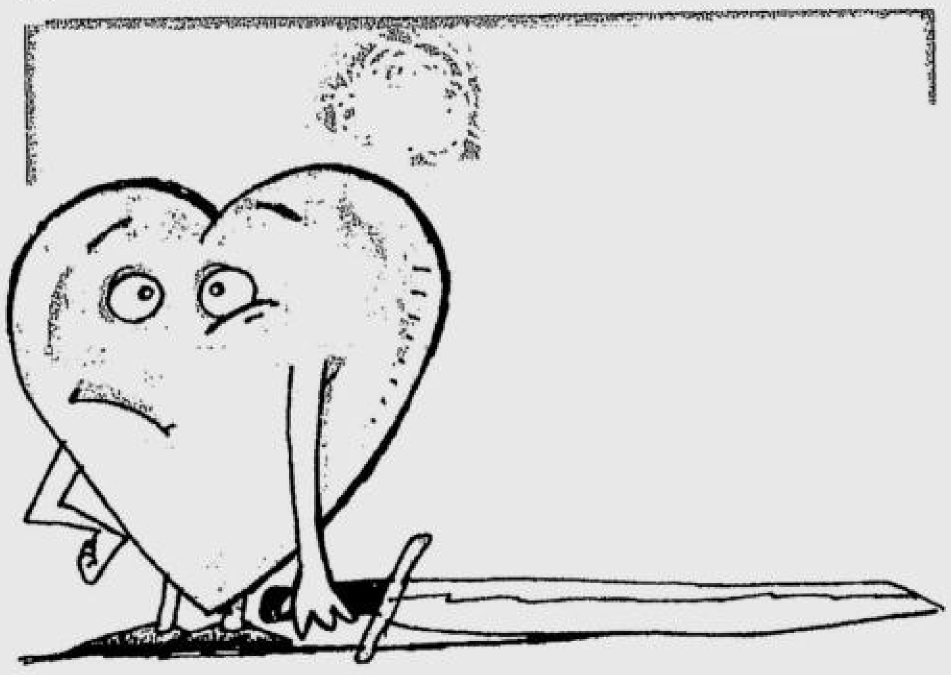
For those who wonder if girls really go for guys who are "whole," I refer you to Margie Holmes. Yet, when has a girl ever told a friend, "I like him, therefore he must be uncircumcised"?

Besides, if that were true, think about just how many of us wouldn't be here now.

(E-mail the author at massie@massie.com.)

Still a long fight against heart diseases

By Rafael R. Castillo



TODAY is the culmination of the four-day long congress of the Philippine Heart Association (PHA). The theme of the convention, "A Hearty Lifestyle for a Healthy Nation," emphasizes the importance of lifestyle practices to prevent cardiovascular diseases. By themselves they're therapeutic, hence they're called therapeutic lifestyle changes, or TLC.

Dr. Rody Sy, PHA past president, highlighted in his keynote speech that TLC was still the mainstay of treatment, and that it was unfortunate that in clinical practice, it was difficult to sustain this as part of the therapeutic regimen the patients should faithfully adhere to.

Dr. Sy exhorted the PHA members to be a prime mover for this. The current PHA officers headed by Dr. Annette Borromeo and president-elect Dr. Romeo Santos have made a commitment to put more emphasis on the PHA's advocacy for a healthy lifestyle, which it is actively promoting together with the Department of Health and 22 other medical organizations.

MEDICAL FILES

Help from medicines

When therapeutic lifestyle changes are not sufficient, and in high-risk patients who have a 20-percent or higher probability of developing a stroke, heart attack and other cardiovascular complications in 10 years, modern medicines can help.

Many medical and surgical interventions were discussed during the convention. One of these is the use of statins against cholesterol problems and for cardiovascular disease prevention.

Not as graphically violent as any war, but probably more disastrous—killing thousands of victims daily who succumb to heart attacks and strokes—is the war against cholesterol and its atherosclerotic complications, affecting vital organs such as the heart, brain and kidneys.

We now have sufficient evidence based on large studies which show that statins (which are frequently prescribed cholesterol-lowering drugs) are important pillars in the management of cholesterol problems and significantly improve primary and secondary prevention of coronary artery disease (CAD).

Revolutionary

The statin era has revolutionized the way we manage dyslipidemia and CAD.

Since the publication of the Scandinavian Simvastatin Survival Study in 1994, several other trials have established the role of statins in patients with CAD, those who are considered high-risk such as diabetics, other people with CAD equivalent, and even in acute coronary syndromes.

Based on these well-designed studies, American and European authorities have issued treatment guidelines where target goals to achieve clinically relevant reductions in CAD risk were set.

But even these treatment guidelines differ on the target goal recommendations, reflecting the many still-unanswered questions in the optimal treatment of hypercholesterolemia and cardiovascular disease prevention. The debate still continues on the treatment goal for LDL-C, the bad type of cholesterol. How low should it be brought down to? Is lower better?

Based on epidemiological research, physicians do not aggressively bring down bad cholesterol levels to physiologic levels necessary for LDL receptors to function normally, which corresponds to 0.5-1.5 mmol/L (20-60 mg/dL).

These levels are well below current target levels. Things looks worse because even current goals are frequently not met in routine clinical practice.

In the management of cholesterol problems, we can maximize the effect of treatment if we can bring down the cholesterol level low enough.

Good cholesterol

The role of HDL-C (the good type of cholesterol) as an independent risk factor for CAD is now gradually being accepted, and being put on the same level as LDL-C.

The American guidelines recommend a normal HDL-C of 40 md/dL or higher. Having less than 40 mg/dL is an additional risk factor while 60 mg/dL or higher is considered a negative risk factor.

Interventions to achieve this goal, in addition to the LDL-C goal, is strongly recommended.

Statins differ in their ability to improve HDL-C.

Although significant inroads have already been achieved in the management of hypercholesterolemia and CAD prevention, treatment gaps still exist. Current LDL-C goals cannot be achieved in a large majority of patients, even those from developed countries.

So what's the use of these guidelines if they could not be implemented in actual clinical practice?

This treatment gap has been extensively documented in both Europe and the United States. Community-based studies of patients with CAD report that 43-67 percent have cholesterol tests, only 27-39 percent are given anticholesterol therapy, and only nine to 11 percent of the total CHD population are treated to an ideal LDL-C level of less than 100 mg/dL. Only 23-31 percent of the total population are treated to an LDL-C level of 130 mg/dL.

Although patients are treated, they might not be getting treatment based on recommended goals. Failure to achieve treatment goals may be caused by inappropriate cholesterol-lowering medication use, low initial dosage, low-potency lipid medication use, patient noncompliance or inadequate dose titration.

The lower goal for patients with CAD or multiple CAD risk factors also pose a big challenge, highlighting the difficulty of achieving the target LDL-C goal.

Why breakfast makes you feel good

WHEN you wake up in the morning after a full night's sleep, you will have gone without eating or drinking anything for eight hours, maybe even more. If you're in a hurry or running late, or think (wrongly) it will help you lose weight, you might skip breakfast.

When you do so, it's likely that later in the morning, you will start to feel sluggish, or find it harder to think clearly, or become irritable. But even if you don't feel any of these things, the inescapable fact is that your body will not be performing at its best, and you pay the price in a number of ways.

The truth is, you do your health a real disservice when you don't eat breakfast, and research shows that it's the meal Filipinos neglect most.

Given the value of breakfast in terms of nutrition and overall wellness, Nestlé, the world's largest food company, has embarked on its Breakfast Campaign 2003 to continue encouraging Filipinos to start the day right. Now on its second year, the campaign, also dubbed Mag-Nestlé Almusal, reminds mothers and young professionals in particular about the importance of breakfast in the development and performance of kids, and the health and well-being of adolescents and adults.

Healthy diet

Emelda Peralta, head of the Dietary Department of the Makati Medical Center and a food expert with years of experience in applied nutrition, sees breakfast in the context of a healthy diet.

"When we talk about a 'healthy diet,' we mean filling the body's need for a certain amount and combination of foods every day, from morning until evening," says Peralta, who also chairs the Board of Nutrition and Dietetics of the Professional Regulation Commission. "That's why breakfast is important. Literally, it means breaking your fast, and a healthy diet begins with breakfast.

"You eat food for energy and other needs. Your body needs four types of macronutrients in varying amounts. These are carbohydrates, proteins, fats and water. Your body also needs micronutrients, namely vitamins and minerals, which trigger metabolic processes that enable your body to function normally," she says.

She noted that nutrition authorities in various countries have developed tables on the recommended dietary allowance (RDA) for both macronutrients and micronutrients.

Starting fuel

The dietary needs of each person vary according to age and state of health. For instance, pregnant or breastfeeding women, or people who are sick or recovering from illness, have different dietary needs.

"Ideally, you need constant amounts of nutrients in your body during the waking hours of the day," Peralta explains. "And since the main function of food is for energy, which is something you need throughout the day, breakfast is your starting fuel."

Most important meal

She personally believes breakfast is the most important among all the day's meals. "Unfortunately, breakfast is given the least attention," she observes. "It's paradoxical in terms of what food is meant for, because we tend to disregard the most valuable meal of the day, nutritionally speaking. Social factors outweigh nutritional considerations, because we focus more on dinner rather than breakfast. Dinner is when families socialize and catch up with each other. But you don't need food at night as much as you need it in the morning. You gain weight if what you eat at dinner isn't used up—it gets stored as fat. You don't really need that fuel anymore."

She notes that based on this observation, some people adhere to a "no food after 6 p.m." diet.

According to Peralta, breakfast doesn't have to be a big, elaborate meal.

"A good breakfast is about healthy food choices that give you the kind of fuel you need, without getting fat or gaining weight. There's milk, yogurt, cereals, fruit and small amounts of protein enough for your needs, that can be part of a healthy breakfast," she advises.

On kids' needs, the nutrition expert says many studies on young children show a direct correlation between breakfast and mental alertness.

"Among children, not having an adequate breakfast can affect performance in school, including their retentive capabilities," she says, citing school breakfast programs in America that are supported permanently by the US Department of Agriculture because of their importance in improving the performance and well-being of children.

Apart from feeling subpar and not functioning as well as one could, what are other consequences of skipping breakfast?

Peralta explains that people who miss breakfast can end up overeating later in the day or taking food they don't need, especially junk food.

"When a child hasn't had breakfast, he'll be hungry by recess time and may not eat the right kind of food. The result is, he's deprived of the proper nutrients," she says.

In the case of adults, depending on their total food intake during the day, they can actually wind up eating more, with an increased likelihood of weight gain, than if they had started with breakfast in the first place.

"They say people get used to not having breakfast, but I can't imagine how they can perform until lunch. When people fast, they can actually end up eating a lot more, consuming more than what their bodies need," Peralta says.

Look, feel good

Peralta advises people who want to lose weight that fasting is not the way to do it. It's better, she says, to eat less than what your body normally needs, but not to fast or miss meals. She also reminds dieters that since they need both macronutrients and micronutrients (the former normally being the source of the latter), they need to be careful not to deprive themselves of necessary vitamins and minerals when they reduce their food intake.

"You definitely feel good when you take a good breakfast because you have enough fuel for energy to start the day with. When you feel good, you look good. Breakfast keeps you alert and gives you a positive disposition.

"Conversely, when you miss out on breakfast, you don't feel your best and you don't look your best. I have friends who develop headaches when they don't get a chance to eat before lunch. The body wants to compensate for the lack of fuel, and that's not ideal. That's why you can't have a healthy diet without a good breakfast," she concludes.

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Study proves safety of leading medicine for high cholesterol

PFIZER recently presented an important study to the country's leading cardiologists and internists that Atorvastatin, the leading medicine for the management of high cholesterol, has been proven safe and effective for their patients.

The study showed that patients with normal or mildly elevated cholesterol levels who took Atorvastatin had 36 percent fewer fatal coronary events and nonfatal heart attacks than patients treated with placebo.

Atorvastatin-treated patients in the Anglo-Scandinavian Cardiac Outcomes Trial (Ascot) also experienced a 27 percent reduction in fatal and nonfatal strokes, as well as a 21 percent reduction in cardiovascular events and procedures.

The Ascot study, involving 19,342 patients with high blood pressure, was designed to determine whether newer blood pressure-lowering regimens produce greater cardiovascular benefits than older regimens. Additionally, more than half of the patients (10,305) enrolled in the study received either Atorvastatin or placebo to determine whether cholesterol-lowering therapy could provide additional cardiovascular benefits.

Cascading the results

Four of the country's respected cardiologists led the cascade of the results of Ascot. In Manila, Dr. Romeo Divinagracia, president of UERM-MMC, and Dr. William Chua, director emeritus of the St. Luke's Heart Institute, proudly shared the Ascot results to their colleagues in cardiology and internal medicine. In Cebu, the same results were shared by Dr. Rody Sy, president of the Asia Pacific Society for Atherosclerosis and Vascular Diseases (APSAVD), and Dr. Jane Galang, president of the Cebu Medical Society (CMS).

In the US, this was cascaded during the American College of Cardiology Convention.

New clinical info

"It is important to note that the results of this landmark trial were achieved above and beyond aggressively treating high blood pressure in these patients," said Prof. Bjorn Dahlof, Ascot co-chair, Sahlgrenska University, Gothenburg, Sweden.

"What we have clearly found is that by adding Atorvastatin therapy to the blood pressure-lowering regimen, we can prevent more heart attacks and strokes," he added.

"Ascot further supports the outstanding safety and efficacy of Atorvastatin and provides additional insight into the benefits of cholesterol-lowering therapy in a broad range of patients," said Dr. Joseph Feczko, Pfizer's president for worldwide development.

"These results provide important new clinical information for millions of people worldwide who have high blood pressure and normal to mildly elevated cholesterol levels."

Investigator-led trial

Ascot is an investigator-led trial coordinated by an independent steering committee, and funded by Pfizer. The study, which is ongoing, began in 1998 and has enrolled patients in the United Kingdom, Ireland, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Finland and Iceland. Study participants had hypertension and at least three other risk factors, such as being 55 years of age or older, smoking or having diabetes.

Since the introduction of Atorvastatin seven years ago, its safety and efficacy has been supported through an extensive clinical trial program with more than 400 ongoing and completed trials involving more than 80,000 patients. Atorvastatin is the leading cholesterol-lowering therapy in the world with more than 48 million patient-years of experience.

Atorvastatin is a prescription medicine marketed as Lipitor in the Philippines and is used with diet to lower cholesterol. Patients must consult their doctor before taking any prescription drug.

More mail call

EUREKA!

Queena N. Lee-Chua

HOW practical is math? Concerned parent Vangie Algabre [evanetph@yahoo.com] has the following query:

My daughter passed the Ateneo entrance exam and she's interested in enrolling in applied math. She wants to know more about this course, including the math subjects she'll deal with and the job opportunities after graduation. More power to you and your column/books.

Congratulations! Being accepted into our Applied Math Program is no easy feat. We developed this program several years ago to address the need for applying math to various areas of society, such as finance and computer science.

Some of the subjects your daughter will be taking will necessarily be the same as those taken by students enrolled in BS Math (more theoretical math), but she will have more applied subjects depending on which area she will be specializing in. For instance, if she goes into mathematical finance, she will be having courses taught by professional bankers, or if she chooses the computer track, she will have a variety of such courses.

As for job opportunities, math graduates are quite flexible. They have gone into banking, finance, manufacturing, quality control, law, philosophy, education, among others. Just make sure your daughter does her best in her studies now.

Math classes

From Tes Yabut [tes_kkk@yahoo.com], who is interested in math worksheets:

I'm a high school math teacher from Bulacan and I've been one of your "fans" since my college days at the Bulacan State University (back in 1992) and an avid reader of your column "Eureka!" I want to ask for some tips on what strategies/techniques I can use to teach the diverse group of learners in my Algebra and Geometry classes.

This summer I'll be preparing worksheets, games and other stuff that I can use for the next school year. Can I ask for sample worksheets/games which you have used in your classes?

Thank you for your support, and I am happy you are preparing early for your math classes. However, I teach college and we don't normally use worksheets (we use Ateneo-made or US textbooks), so I am afraid I cannot send you any.

The Internet is your best bet. Go to any search engine and type algebra or geometry and tons of resources will appear. (Try it! I just finished doing it.) Most of these resources can be downloaded—make sure to e-mail the site creators before using them.

Also, I have written lengthily and frequently in the past about math strategies. I also feature math puzzles regularly (June and December). Get hold of my book "Eureka!" for tips and math games and puzzles. It should be available in National Book Store and Powerbooks.

Corrections

Oops! I made some errors in my Nov. 9, 2002 column. Pablo Baldazo [reyriverconsult1@aol.com] writes:

Thank you for mentioning...the success of our time series research activities at UP Los Baños. Although our findings are just a blip on the spectrum of hydrologic knowledge, we are quite gratified with the computational tests we have done so far. There are still a whole lot of questions we haven't answered. Among them is the question of linearity or nonlinearity, as the case may be. But that might be a question for mathematicians. I hope some of your associates in pure mathematics at the ADMU could help those like us who are into practical applications of the FFTs.

Before I sign off, I would like to make a slight correction about your report. Prof. Avelino Ramirez (not Avelina) is happily married...and (has) three well-adjusted children, all living with him in Los Baños, Laguna. Also, Dr. Ramirez just received his Ph.D. from UP Diliman, major in agricultural climatology (or meteorology).

Also, I never attended Idaho State University. Whoever gave you that information was probably a former resident or student of that...school. I attended the University of Pittsburgh in southern Pennsylvania as a graduate student in civil engineering. I did take a few remote video classes from the University of Idaho at Boise. Idaho has two state universities. They are two good schools of higher learning with quite different programs and science reputations. University of Idaho is stronger in science and engineering while Idaho State University is stronger in the humanities and health professions.

Again, thank you very much for mentioning our work at Pagasa and at Los Baños. I am sure it is a big boost to the great utility of the FFTs for both data reconstruction and data forecasting. Maybe someday, we can (distinguish) the difference between those two usages of the Fourier Transform.

Thank you for the clarifications and my apologies for the errors. Calling the media service of DOST: please check details before passing on news to us.

(Contact the author at blessbook@yahoo.com.)

ASK THE DENTIST
Paul R. De Castro, DMD

Only one-third of tooth left

I HAVE a tooth that lost its filling. I looked at it and it seems that only one-third of the original tooth remains. I would like to save it but is it worth it? I might spend more money only to lose the tooth. What is your advice?

Eddie L.

Your tooth is always worth saving even if only the root remains. As long as your dentist says he can save it, go for it. It may seem like a big expense in the beginning but if repaired adequately, the repair will cost less than having the tooth pulled and paying for a good replacement.

To foreclose on the fate of a tooth so soon would be lacking in judgment. It is always good to have your original teeth because they are more efficient in chewing and they feel more natural.

(E-mail your questions at dentalqs@yahoo.com.)

Asian medical center opens nutrition clinic

IN RESPONSE to the growing public interest on food and nutrition, Asian Hospital and Medical Center has opened the AHMC Nutrition Clinic to serve both walk-in patients and those referred by physicians.

The clinic is an arm of the AHMC Clinical Nutrition Department in promoting optimum health and total healing through nutrition education and counseling.

The clinic is manned by registered nutritionist-dietitians who practice individualized approach in patient/client care. Each patient/client is considered unique. The nutritional plan is based on the unique qualities and characteristics of the individual patient/client.

Part of the service includes nutritional assessment, analysis of eating habits, calculation of diet based on the diet prescription and mapping a suggested meal pattern, and nutrition education and counseling.

The opening of the clinic could not have been more timely, especially with the burgeoning nutritional information coming from all sources, leaving the public vulnerable victims of fads and fallacies, or even more confused and misinformed.

The AHMC aims to make the public aware that the best sources of nutrition information are still the professional nutritionist-dietitians and the medical doctors.

The AHMC Nutrition Clinic is open from Monday to Friday from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. and on Saturdays from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. or by appointment.

Answer to hangover

A TERRIBLE headache in the morning, a gross taste in the mouth and a guilty conscience. These are just some conditions one suffers from after taking too much alcohol the other night.

Otherwise known as a hangover, this condition happens after one ingests alcohol. The body breaks down alcohol into (among other things) acetaldehyde, before converting it into less harmful substances.

Acetaldehyde is what messes with the brain and together with a host of other alcohol by-products like methanol, they also short-circuit the nervous system.

Studies suggest the severity of a hangover varies according to the amount of alcohol one takes in a given period of time (a bigger amount in a shorter time), the body's capacity to deal with poisons and age (the older one gets the worse is the hangover the next day).

Suggestions to relieve a hangover include making sure one's stomach is full before drinking, taking plenty of water, or for "emergencies," popping tablets containing sodium bicarbonate and aspirin like Alka Seltzer.

According to Alka Seltzer manufacturer Bayer, these ingredients form sodium citrate which works as a buffer and neutralizes stomach acids. This results in relief from nausea, upset stomach and even diarrhea.

"I thought I'll never celebrate another birthday after my heart attack. With my anti-cholesterol statin*, I'm looking forward to more candles to blow."

-Zenaida Fortes
Senior Accountant
Heart-attack victim

☑ Check with your doctor the new affordable statin*...

Now for Life!

Recent landmark trials have shown the beneficial effects of the cholesterol-lowering drug known as statins.[1] Statins help prolong lives, lower heart-related deaths, prevent heart attacks and strokes... only IF they are taken for at least 3 years, religiously.[2] COST of statins though is a big barrier to compliance.

REFERENCES:
[1] Kjekshus et al. Reducing the risk of Coronary Events: Evidence from the Scandinavian Simvastatin Survival Study (4S) Am J Cardiol 1995; 76:64C-68C,
[2] Heart Protection Study Collaborative Group MRC/BHF Heart Protection Study of cholesterol lowering with simvastatin in 20,536 high-risk individuals: a randomized placebo controlled trial. The Lancet 2002 July; 360 (9236): 7-22.

* This class of drug is approved for sale by BFAD as a prescription drug and should be bought only with a prescription.

A public health service announcement from the cardiovascular division of United Laboratories, Inc.

therapharma
Your partner in cardiovascular healthcare.

e-services

e-card out this year

The GSIS is embarking in yet another technological upgrade this year. It will launch the GSIS e-card: a membership card with the combined features of an Automated Teller Machine (ATM) card and built-in e-purse.

Members can avail of the benefits and services provided by the GSIS anytime and anywhere through the GSIS e-card. It may be used as an ATM card, e-card and cash card. Thus, when a member's application for a loan is approved, he can access the ATM machine for the proceeds of his loan.

What's in it for the GSIS and its members? The e-card will ensure that all records are updated and all transactions are aboveboard. As members enroll for the e-card, the latest information on the member data records are updated, captured and stored in databases, paving the way for a new system that will wipe out duplications and data fraud. The finger print biometric feature of the GSIS e-card will ensure that the card will be foolproof.

With the built-in e-purse, the e-card may be eventually used for retail, mass transport, fast-food, vending, parking, movies, payphones, internet and utility bills transactions.

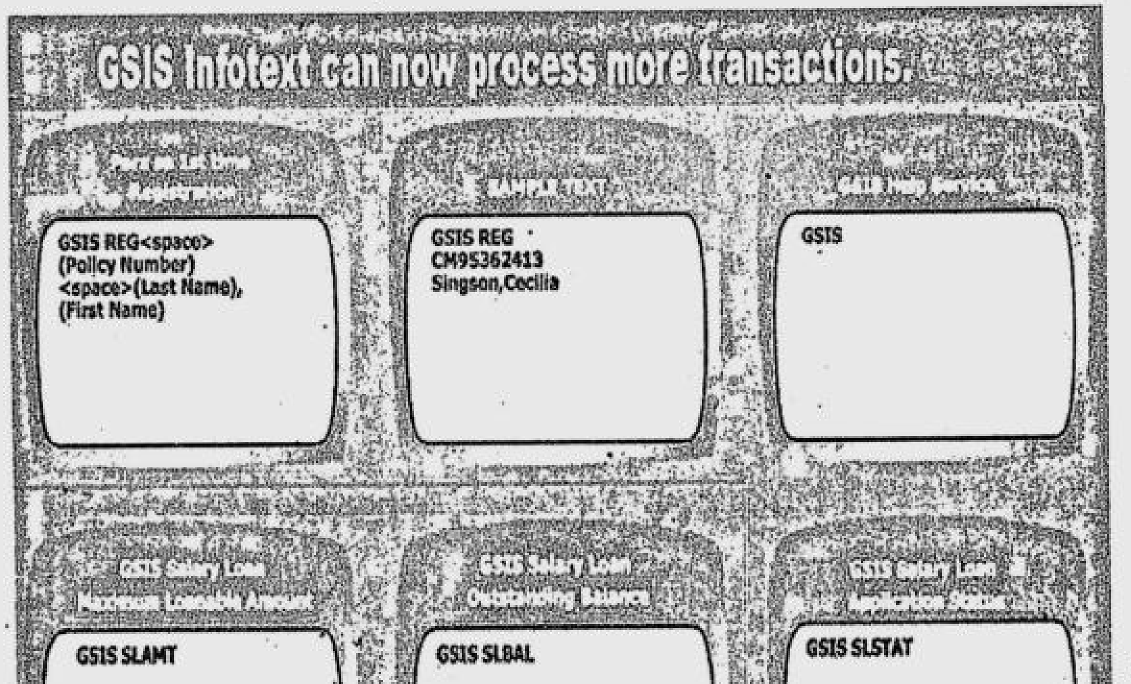
Access the GSIS via the internet

The GSIS leads the government's e-revolution as it enhances its internet portal, the e-GSIS. Now, a GSIS member can access his personal records in just a few clicks. Logging on to www.gsis.gov.ph. allows him to:

- View all their transactions with the GSIS
- Download forms
- Compute for loanable amounts and retirement proceeds via the online calculator
- Learn about the latest GSIS programs, policies, news and announcements.

Unlike other government websites, the GSIS web is no longer a mere electronic brochure. It is now connected to the organization's databases. Thus, by simply tapping on the keyboard, a member can see a record of all his transactions on the computer screen.

That is a responsive GSIS—hassle-free, convenient, fast, and reliable.


GSIS Infotext can now process more transactions.
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** Optional
*** Optional (default is RA8291)
A = RA 660
B = RA8291
C = RA 1616
GSIS infoText
I-send sa 2390 Globe or 248 SMART Simply Amazing!

GSIS @ ur service

The GSIS has launched its new TV program, GSIS @ ur service. The pilot episode, which was aired last May 6 over RPN9, featured the life of Juan, played by veteran actor Berting Labra. Juan was separated from his wife with whom he has a child. Before he died, he re-married and had another child by second wife, Cecilia. The conflict arose when the first wife claimed for survivorship benefits.

The launching of the TV program coincides with the GSIS anniversary month and is a fitting tribute to the System's 66 years of providing service to government workers.

The GSIS has consistently delivered services that have sustained and improved the lives of public servants. GSIS @ ur service shows in drama cum advisory format how different member-related claims and situations are resolved.

A boon to retirees

No More AMC Limit

The GSIS effected the removal of the Average Monthly Compensation (AMC) limit in January 2003.

Benefitting from the new policy are members earning above P16,000, comprising 5% of the 1.3 million government work force. The removal of the limit affords them the full pension benefits of the retirement scheme under Republic Act 8291, otherwise known as the New GSIS Charter. RA 8291 provides that the pension of a government retiree should be 90% of his average monthly compensation for the last 36 months of service in government.

Prior to the removal of the AMC limit, a retiree who earns more than P16,000 while in active government service will get no more than P14,400 as pension when he or she retires because of the limit imposed on the AMC. Even if his salary is P20,000, P30,000, P40,000, or more, his computed monthly pension will not exceed P14,400 because the AMC limit is currently pegged at P16,000.

With the removal of the AMC limit, a member receives a pension equivalent to 90% of his AMC for the last three years before his retirement or separation from service. Thus, if his average monthly compensation is P20,000, and he has served the government for 36 years, he receives a pension of P18,000. This amount is 25% higher than P14,400, the amount that he would receive had the AMC limit not been removed. The corresponding increase in his GSIS contributions will only be P210 a month.

Since the GSIS annually increases the amount of pension with the inflation rate as index, the GSIS pensioner, in three years' time, will receive a pension which is equal to or even higher than the last salary he received.

With the AMC as the basis of all GSIS benefits, removing the AMC limit raises the social security protection of public servants to its highest, not only in terms of retirement but in the event of all contingencies such as sickness, separation from service, and death.

Expanded *Bahay Ko* Program

The GSIS has always given its members a better opportunity to own a house. In 2001, it introduced the *Bahay Ko* housing program where the house design and bill of materials are provided free of charge to the borrower. But the GSIS did not stop at *Bahay Ko.* It has added innovations to the GSIS housing program to better respond to its members' growing needs.

USE THE GSIS EXISTING DESIGNS OR DESIGN YOUR OWN HOUSE

The GSIS offers its members 12 free optional house designs to help them save on architectural costs. But the GSIS also allows its members full involvement in designing their own homes and deciding which construction materials to use.

BORROW MORE THAN P500,000

Does your dream house cost more than P500,000? GSIS can cover the costs for you. A member may now borrow more than half a million, provided that such amount is lowest of the following: the actual need, the capacity to pay and collateral valuation.

BUY AN EXISTING HOUSE

The GSIS lends its members money so that they may acquire a single detached house, a townhouse, a duplex, or any other type of dwelling unit.

BUILD A HOUSE

Members can enjoy easy financing terms when they build their dream house on a lot registered in their name, their parent's or their child's. The GSIS also helps its members acquire the lot of their choice and grant them additional loan to construct a house on it.

REPAIR OR RENOVATE A HOUSE

Members who already have a house but would like to renovate or expand it may borrow up to P500,000 from the GSIS. This new loan window allows a member to refurbish his existing home or any property of choice, for as long as it is registered in his name, his spouse's or even a relative's within the first degree of consanguinity or affinity.

BUY A HOUSE AT 40% DISCOUNT

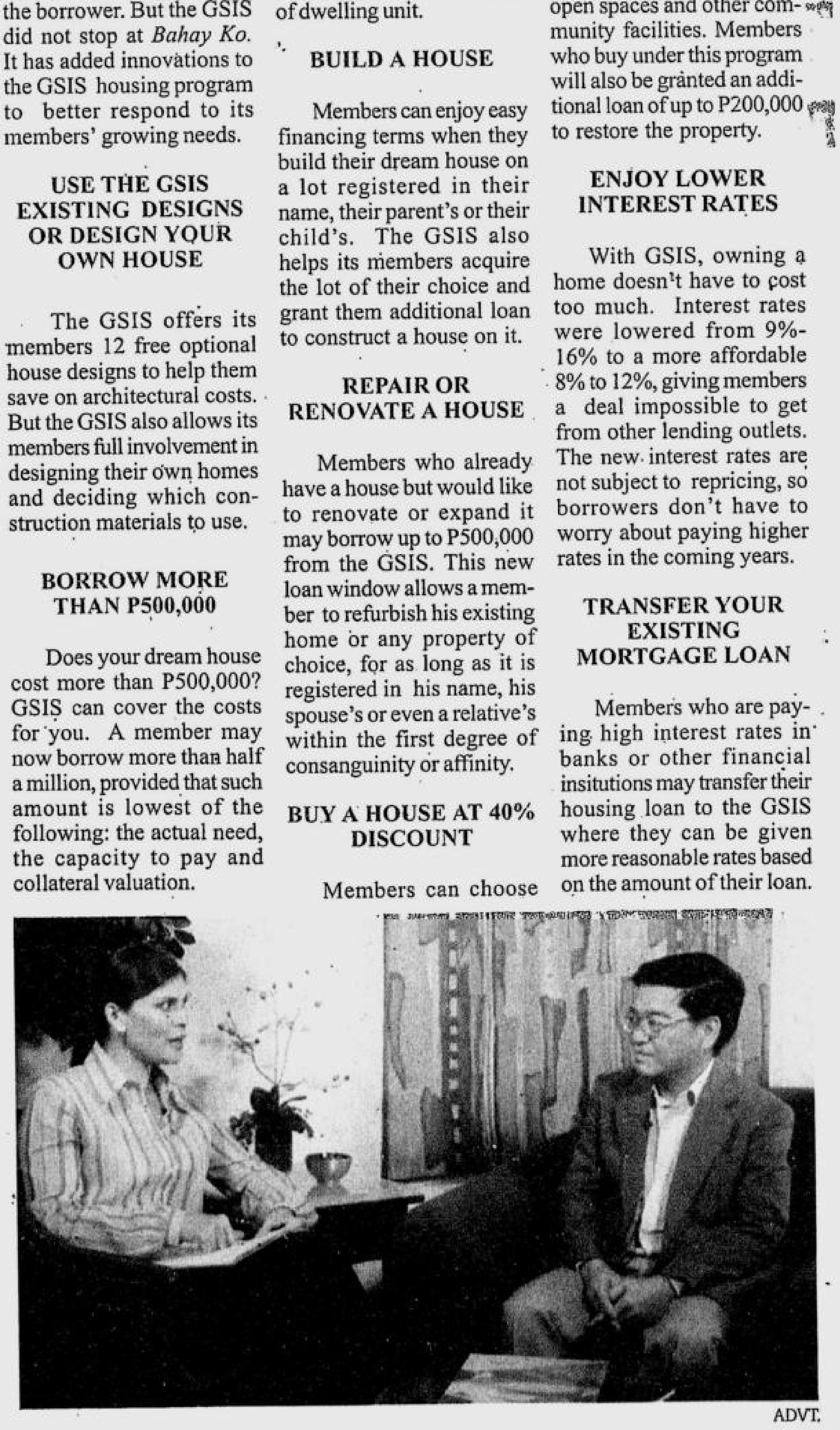
Members can choose from 8,000 unoccupied GSIS housing units and buy them at almost half the price. While most of the units need repair, they are nevertheless located in accessible areas and in subdivisions that have paved roads, entrance gates, open spaces and other community facilities. Members who buy under this program will also be granted an additional loan of up to P200,000 to restore the property.

ENJOY LOWER INTEREST RATES

With GSIS, owning a home doesn't have to cost too much. Interest rates were lowered from 9%-16% to a more affordable 8% to 12%, giving members a deal impossible to get from other lending outlets. The new interest rates are not subject to repricing, so borrowers don't have to worry about paying higher rates in the coming years.

TRANSFER YOUR EXISTING MORTGAGE LOAN

Members who are paying high interest rates in banks or other financial insitutions may transfer their housing loan to the GSIS where they can be given more reasonable rates based on the amount of their loan.



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With the nationwide electronic integration of GSIS database

Service anytime, anywhere now possible

It is now possible for a GSIS member to transact business with the GSIS in any of its field offices regardless of where his records have been originally kept.

It is because the GSIS was able to achieve in barely nine months what it has been attempting to realize in the last 25 years: the establishment of an integrated central database accessible to all field offices nationwide. This means that the mainframe computer system located at the GSIS' headquarters now supplies all the information requirements of every GSIS operating unit, making service anytime, anywhere possible.

Thus, there is no more branch or district office but only GSIS. The computer programs that were formerly utilized only in the home office before are now being used in the field and district offices. Specifically, the Integrated Query System which can churn out data electronically in a few seconds can now be accessed in the field offices. Although the data can be viewed through the system, a security feature is installed to protect the database from being tampered. Aside from the facility that can review the records of logs in the database, the System has a firewall or virus-proof mechanism. The GSIS has off-site and on-site back-up systems which are updated daily, weekly and monthly.

Initially, the communication line between the home and field offices was established. In the absence of landlines, the VSAT or via satellite network was utilized. Then, the files were obtained from the field offices, transported to Manila and integrated in the mainframe. The databases were cleansed to avoid duplication of files. The field personnel were trained on how to use the system and different applications.

Retirement Loan available soon

The GSIS will launch yet another interesting loan window to respond to its members' changing financial needs: the P30 billion Retirement Loan Program.

Under the program, members who are at least 60 years old shall be allowed to borrow an amount 30 times their accrued basic monthly pension (ABMP). Those who are less than 60 years old shall be allowed to borrow nine times their ABMP.

The formula for obtaining the ABMP is .025 x Year of Service x (Average Monthly Compensation for the last 36 months + P700.)

To qualify for the program, a member must: (1) be in active service; (2) have a total of at least 180 months (15 years) of creditable service; (3) have no arrearages in other GSIS loan accounts or have no loans declared in default by the GSIS (however, borrowers who will use proceeds of the retirement loan to update outstanding GSIS obligations will be allowed to avail of it); (4) be working in an agency which has no arrearages in premium or loan repayments; and, (5) be employed in an agency which has agreed to submit its remittance list in the electronic form prescribed by the GSIS.

The principal and accumulated interest of the retirement loan shall be due and demandable upon death/separation of the borrower from service. The member may select the payment term most convenient to him: (1) a uniform monthly amortization where member can choose his desired term but payment period must not exceed age 65; (2) monthly payment of interest only and payment of principal at time of separation/retirement; and (3) no monthly payments but loan should be paid upon separation or retirement from service with the corresponding interest.

There are only two documentary requirements for the availment of the loan: (1) application form; and (2) certification from the employer that the agency is submitting or has agreed to submit its remittance list in electronic format. But if the agency is already using the GSIS electronic format, the certification is no longer necessary.

Members can now ensure private properties with GSIS

The GSIS now offers affordable coverage not only for government properties but also for private properties of GSIS members. It recently launched three new general insurance programs to cater to its members' non-life insurance requirements - motor vehicle, fire and personal accident insurance – putting the lives and properties of GSIS members in safe hands.

These new insurance plans are available to both active and retired GSIS members. The legitimate spouses, legitimate children and parents of active members may also take advantage of the programs.

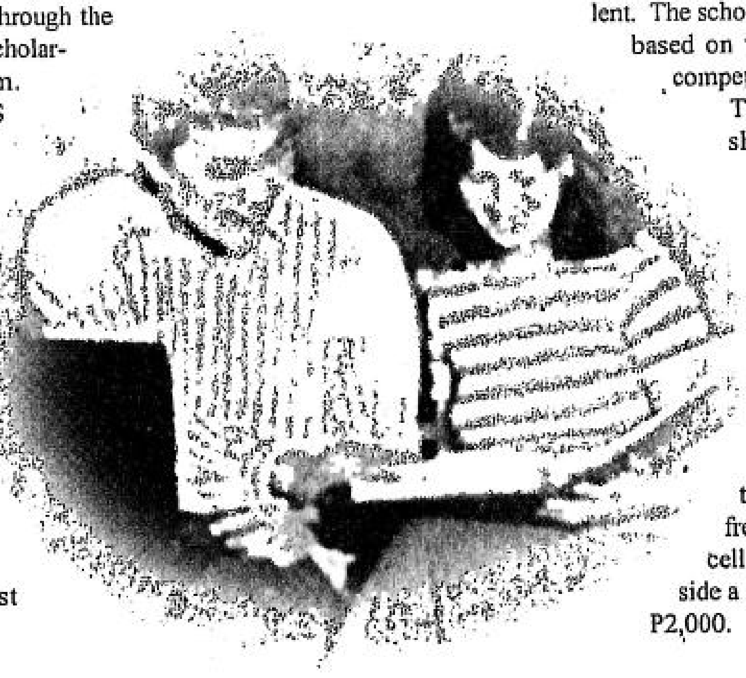
At 20% discount over prevailing industry rates, these GSIS non-life products are among the most responsive in the country.

The motor vehicle insurance covers public utility vehicles, motorcycles and commercial vehicles like trucks not older than ten years. Fire Insurance covers residential, condominium, townhouse and apartment units, commercial and business units, and household or business fixtures, furniture and personal fittings. The properties must be registered in the name of a qualified assured. In cases of corporate properties, the qualified assured must own majority of the shares of the corporation.

Personal accident insurance covers contingencies of death, dismemberment or permanent total disability and provides medical reimbursement and bereavement assistance.

With the launching of these new non-life insurance products, GSIS members can now begin to enjoy property and personal accident protection at affordable rates.

College Scholarship Program beefed up



This year, 42 deserving high school students were given a better shot at securing a solid college education through the GSIS College Scholarship Program. The new GSIS scholars bested 4,700 other applicants from all over the country in an examination administered by the Center for Educational Measurement (CEM) nationwide last May 19, 2003.

The GSIS scholarship program is open to children of active GSIS members who have graduated from high school with an average of at least 85% or the equivalent. The scholars were selected based on the results of the competitive examination.

The GSIS Scholarship Program is among the ranks of the most responsive in the country today. GSIS scholars may enroll in any school of their choice, subject to GSIS terms and conditions. They receive free tuition and miscellaneous fees alongside a monthly stipend of P2,000.

GSIS assets hit P246 B mark in 2002

The Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) total assets hit P246 billion in 2002. During the same period, it earned a net profit of P32.2 billion.

From January to December 2002, the GSIS' gross revenue was P64.35 billion, posting a 14% increase over that of last year's P56.23 billion.

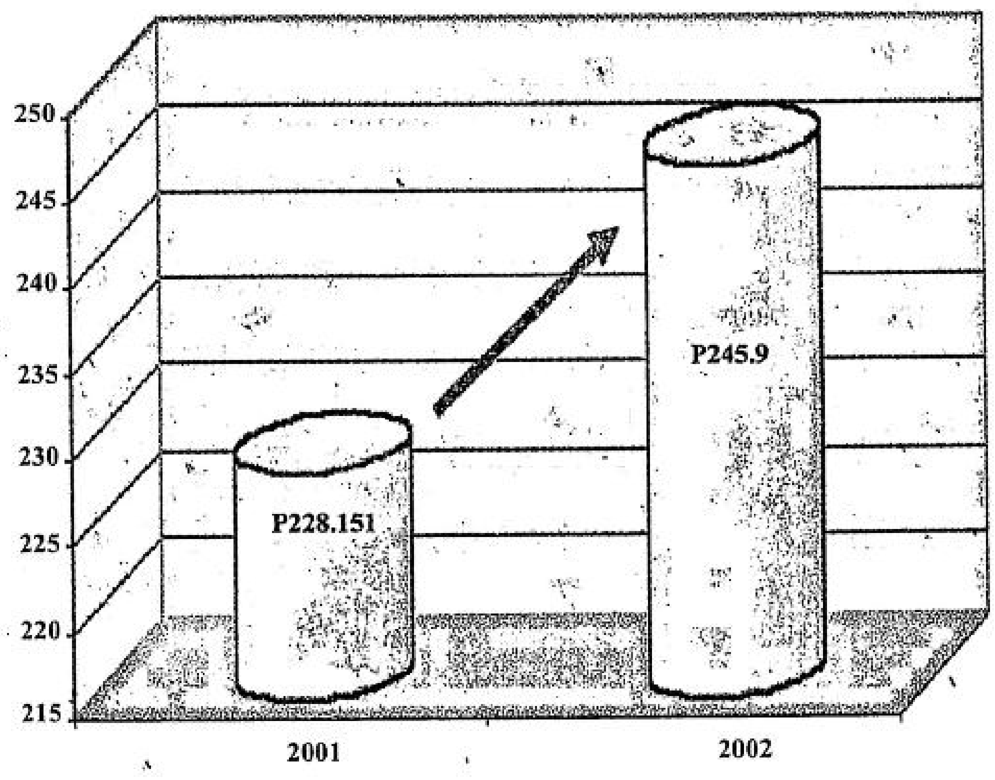
Forty -five percent of the increase was derived from insurance revenues supported by member-focused programs such as the emergency loan, pension loan, continuing condonation and restructuring program, improved *Bahay Ko*, and multi-window loans. Investment activities– accounting for 55% of the increase - remained the principals of this revenue growth.

The GSIS likewise posted a net income of P127.98 million every working day last year. What makes this feat more significant is that GSIS paid out P97.02 million in life and retirement claims daily over the same period. The GSIS likewise generated a P3.24 billion savings on its administrative expense loading, having spent only 6.73% or P4.15 billion out of an authorized 12% or P7.39 billion.

The System released P22.2 billion for its loan windows in 2002, re-establishing its role as one of the most liquid government financial institutions in the country today.

Salary loan disbursements to 725,970 members amounted to P15.7 billion while policy loans granted to 793,344 regular and optional policy holders was P3.6 billion. Emergency loans granted to 137, 983 members reached P1.16 billion. Pension loans of 18,737 retirees was P0.41 billion.

Because of this financial growth, the GSIS was able to increase the funding of its lending and benefit portfolios. This financial stability affirms that the GSIS is fully outfitted to meet not only its mandated obligations but also to provide its members with additional and more responsive services and benefits.



GSIS assets in 2001 and 2002

New Health Care Benefits in the offing

In the pipeline

Hospitalization Support Program

Recognizing its members' need for assistance in shouldering high costs of medical care in the country, the GSIS will launch the Hospitalization Support Program, giving members substantial discounts in accredited hospitals.

GSIS members, their dependents and retirees can all benefit from the program. Active members and retirees will receive 30% discount on room and Board rates, 10% on professional fees, 30% on medicines, and 50% on using GSIS-sponsored medical equipment. They are also entitled to a 40% discount on common medical procedures and 35% on special procedures. Qualified dependents, on the other hand, are entitled to a uniform 10% discount on all of the mentioned products and services.

The program is symbiotic: the hospital extends quality and affordable medical services to GSIS members in exchange for state-of-the-art medical facilities of their choice, purchased for them by the GSIS.

The Hospitalization Support Program will have tertiary hospitals as partners – those with adequate medical facilities, sufficient ambulatory services and a well-stocked pharmacy, able to perform intensive surgical procedures and having at least 150 beds. About 68 hospitals around the country are already undergoing pre-selection based on GSIS' stringent set of criteria.

A P400 million initial funding backs up the GSIS Hospitalization Program. More funds will be infused into the program as more hospitals are accredited.

Medical Reimbursement Insurance Plan

To ease the burden of prohibitive hospitalization costs for its members, the Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) is implementing the GSIS Medical Reimbursement Insurance Plan, its latest General Insurance product.

The new program is designed to befit GSIS members' financial capacities and to adequately cover the current cost of hospitalization.

All active GSIS members below the age of 60 are qualified to purchase any of the five plans under the program upon submission of a health declaration.

Renewable yearly, the plan is non-participating, non-cumulative and has no provision for policy loan and cash surrender value. Each term of cover entitles the insured to 45 hospitalization/confinement days. Also covered by the insurance are specific benefits for room and board, drugs and medicine, professional fee, laboratory and x-ray procedures, surgeon's and anesthesiologist's fee and special charges, as determined by PhilHealth rules and regulations.

The GSIS Medical Reimbursement Insurance Plan has several advantages over other regular health insurance plans. Claims are processed within only three days upon receipt of complete documents. A longer prescriptive period of 90 days for filing of claims is allowed. The amount to be reimbursed is independent and computed over and above Philhealth refund.

The GSIS Medical Reimbursement Plan is one of the most affordable and adequate covers available in the market.

Plan	Monthly	Quarterly	Semi-Annual	Annual	Maximum Amount Reimbursable
Plan C	285.00	845.00	1,670.00	3,065.00	Not more than 100% of total compensable amount per PhilHealth adjudication guidelines
Plan D	565.00	1,685.00	3,340.00	6,130.00	Not more than 200% (do)
Plan E	845.00	2,530.00	5,010.00	9,190.00	Not more than 300% (do)
Plan F	1,130.00	3,370.00	6,680.00	12,255.00	Not more than 400% (do)
Plan G	1,410.00	4,215.00	8,350.00	15,315.00	Not more than 500% (do)

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CAMARIN Cal City LA240m² FA104m² 2Bdrms 1T&B P1.2M Vic/Gie 8903461 loc. 27

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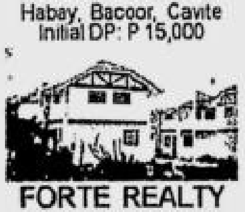

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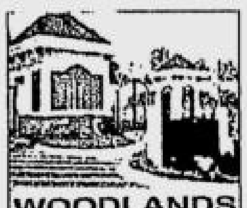

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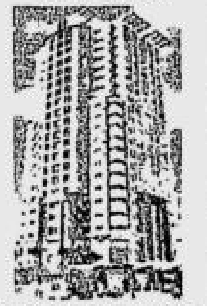

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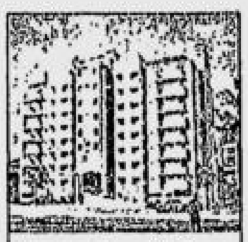

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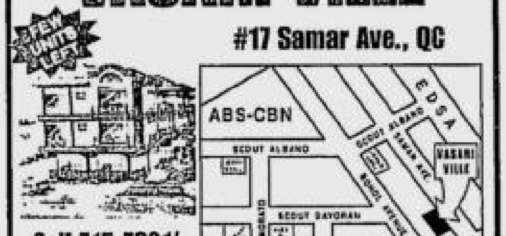

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MUNTINLUPA

SOUTH GREENHTS VILL 300m² fenced P3,833/m² Vic Gigie 8903461 loc 25/27

PASIG

METROVILLE SUBD LA333m² P4,054/m² Vic 8903461 loc. 27

QUEZON CITY

CORINTHIAN 600M² 4121825

MINDANAO AVE 500m²
9262953

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CONDO/TWNHSE

QUEZON CITY

LOT

SAN JUAN

GREENHILLS 1077m² 7242629

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TAGAYTAY 1.7hec 1700/m *09167826569•6471960

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- View of Mt. Makiling
- With existing clubhouse, swimming pool, and basketball court
- 110 sqm average lot area

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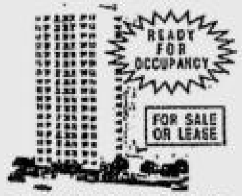

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BAGUIO

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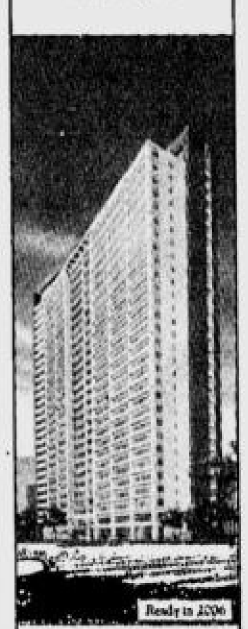
REAL ESTATE FOR SALE

COMML/RESDL

FAIRWAYS TOWER
along McKinley Road



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COMML/RESDL

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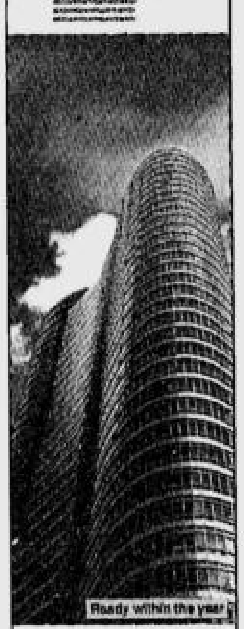

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PASAY

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PUBLIC NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the Memorial Lots of Herminia Baja-Panlilio at the (Sucat) Mla. Memorial Park Cem. EFGH of Blk 389 of Emerald Acres, under Conract #1208, had been transferred by her legal heirs to Angelita P. Bantigue. Said Deed of Transfer & Affidavit of Adjudication has been JUDICIALLY SETTLED on May 15, 2003 under Doc# 443, Book 90, Page 9, Series 2003, before Notary Public Generoso O. Legazpi, Jr. of Makati City.
(PDI-May 17, 24 & 31 2003)

PUBLIC NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late ROMEO D. RUIVIVAR has been extrajudicially settled by the heirs under deed of extrajudicial settlement of estate dated May 15, 2003 as per Doc 47, Page 10, Book V, Series of 2003 before notary public Zenaida O. Balmas of Q.C.
(PDI- May 31, June 7, & 14 2003)

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late PASTOR A. KIMPO Jr. Has been extrajucially settled among his heirs on 03 April 2002 before Notary Public Al-Flo C. Nilooban of Las Pinas City as per Doc No. 141, Page No. 029, Book No. 2, Series of 2002.
(PDI May 24, 31 & June 7, 2003)

NOTICE OF LOSS

Lost Stock Certificates
in the name of:
Jesus R. Gonzaga, Jr.
1.FMF DEVELOPMENT CORP.
No. 11469-216 shares
2.BASIC CONSOLIDATED
No. 134493-645 shares
No.168056-602 shares

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PERSONAL

NOVENA TO THE MOST SACRED HEART OF JESUS

May the most Sacred Heart of Jesus be praised, blessed, loved, adored and glorified throughout the whole world now and forever. Amen.

Most Sacred Heart of Jesus. Pray for us.

Thank you very much, Most Sacred Heart of Jesus for favor granted.

Philippine Air Force
Air Force Logistics and Support Command
Headquarters 420th Supply Wing
Clark Air Base, Air Force City
Angeles City, Pampanga

NOTICE OF SALE BY PUBLIC BIDDING

THE PAF Disposal Committee will receive sealed bids until **17 June 2003, 2:00 PM at Conference Room, 420th Supply Wing, Clark Air Base, Angeles City, Pampanga** for the sale of the following unserviceable properties on **"As Is, Where Is" basis.**

Lot Number/Description		Location	Min Bid Price
02-154-03	– Six (6) UH-IH Carcasses w/ tail nrs; 178, 373, 613, 961, 457 & 958	410th MW, Clark Air Base Angeles City, Pampanga	P 40,000.00
02-190-07	– One (1) unit Airplane Utility N22B w/ tail nr B-20	220th AW, BEAB, Mactan Cebu City	12,000.00
02-201-09	– Assorted Quartermaster & Office Equipment	Disposal Yard, Basa Air Base Floridablanca, Pampanga	8,000.00
8-040-008	– Three (3) units T-41D Acft Carcasses w/ tail nrs 974,975 & 952	Disposal Yard, Basa Air Base Floridablanca, Pampanga	40,000.00

REMINDERS TO BIDDERS:

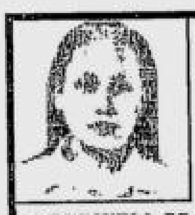
1. To inspect the properties to determine their actual condition before the bidding.
2. To submit bid in PAF official bid form.
3. Earnest money is required in the form of cash or manager's check equivalent to (10%) of the bid price.
4. To be on time. No bids will be accepted once unsealing of the bids commence.
5. Pre-bid conference and issuance of Bid Forms (P200.00 per set) will be on **11 June 2003, 2:00 PM at 420th SW Conference Rm, Clark Air Base, Angeles City, Pampanga.**
6. Inspection schedule will be from 03-11 June 2003, from 0800H to 1600H, Monday to Friday.

PAF DISPOSAL COMMITTEE RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, TO WAIVE ANY DEFECTS FOUND THEREIN, AND TO ACCEPT SUCH BIDS AS MAY BE CONSIDERED MOST ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE PAF.

For details and schedule of inspection: call Cpt Vicente F Flora Jr PAF at (045) 599-2015 LOC. 6524 OR CELL no. 0920-4069761.

(Sgd.) CLAUDIO P ESTALILLA
Brigadier General, AFP
Chairman, PAF Disposal Committee

(PDI – May 31, June 1 & 2, 2003)



NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

Ms. MARICEL MENOR whose picture appears hereon is no longer connected with **CRIMSON ESTATES, INC, GOLDWELL PROPERTIES & RESOURCES, INC., NOVA NORTHSTAR SERVICE APARTMENT HOTEL CO., INC.** or any member company of the **HERNANDEZ GROUP** effective May 23, 2003.

Any transaction entered into by her after that date in behalf of the companies will not be honored.

This is also to serve notice to the public of the loss of Crimson Estates, Inc. Official Receipts No. 4901-4950 and 4951-5000 and are deemed cancelled.

NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMPANY

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The **NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMPANY (NDC)** invites qualified Engineering Consulting Firms to apply for Eligibility, and if subsequently found eligible to bid for Project Management Consultant (PMC) services to carry out the required technical/ engineering services, project management support, and construction supervision for the following projects:

1. Rehabilitation/Construction of the Alabang Viaduct (Toll Road 1-TR1), and Construction of the South Luzon Extension (Toll Road 3 – TR 3) from Calamba, Laguna to Sto. Tomas, Batangas; and
2. Construction of the Lipa City – Batangas City (stage 2) of the Southern Tagalog Arterial Road (STAR).

Interested Engineering Consulting Firms are required to submit an expression of interest on any or both of the above listed Projects and details of their technical capabilities and similar related experience by sending their names and eligibility documents properly labeled as **"LETTER OF INTENT FOR ELIGIBILITY CHECK FOR ENGINEERING CONSULTING SERVICES FOR THE (Project/s)"** to the following address not later than **3:00 PM of June 9, 2003**:

NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMPANY
8th Floor, NDC Building, 116 Tordesillas St.
Salcedo Village, Makati City, Philippines
Tel. Nos. 840-11-46; 840-48-38 local 256
Fax No. 840-4862
Attention: Mr. Al Malihan

Eligibility requirements and forms may be secured at the above address between **May 26 to June 4, 2003**.

All particulars relative to Eligibility, Bidding, Bid Evaluation and Awarding of Contract shall be governed by the provisions of the Implementing Rules and Regulations of E.O. No. 40, series of 2001.

The NDC reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any minor defect therein, and accept the offer most advantageous to the Government. NDC further assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify the prospective bidders for any expense incurred in the processing of their eligibility to bid and/or in the preparation of the bid.

(PDI–May 23 & 31, 2003)

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- ~~Cotabato~~
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- ~~Gensan~~
- Laguna
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Republic of the Philippines
PROCUREMENT SERVICE
INTER-AGENCY BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The **PROCUREMENT SERVICE (PS)** invites G-EPS registered suppliers to apply for eligibility and to bid for the **SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF JOGGING SUIT for the Philippine Air Force (PAF).**

The approved budget for this contract is **P8,000,000.00.**

All interested parties are invited to attend the **Pre-Bid Conference** that will be held on **June 10, 2003, 3:00 P.M., Tuesday, at the PS Conference Room, 2nd Floor, PS Complex, Cristobal St., Paco, Manila.**

The bid documents shall be available at the **PS-PURCHASING DIVISION** starting **May 26, 2003** upon payment of non-refundable fee of **One Thousand Pesos (Php1,000.00).**

The bidders shall drop their duly accomplished eligibility requirements, technical and financial proposals in three separate sealed envelopes in the bid box located at the Office of the Head of the IABAC Secretariat at the above-mentioned address. Deadline for submission and opening of bids shall be on **June 26, 2003 at 9:30 A.M., Thursday.**

For more information, please call the **PS-Purchasing Division** at telephone nos. **563-94-02 or 563-93-74.**

PS reserves the right to waive any formality in the responses to the eligibility requirements and to this invitation. PS further reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, or declare a failure of bidding, or not award the contract, and makes no assurance that a contract shall be entered into as a result of this invitation.

(Sgd.) EDUARDO P. OPIDA
Chairman, IABAC

(PDI–May 24 & 31, 2003)

WANTED TO BUY: RURAL/SAVINGS/THRIFT BANK/S

A group of companies engaged in various businesses in the Philippines and abroad is interested in acquiring Rural and/or Savings/Thrift Bank/s in the Philippines. Interested parties are requested to submit an executive brief and/or information memorandum of the Bank/s they are representing, together with the latest audited and/or interim financial statements of the Bank/s and the proposed terms of sale. Complete confidentiality of each and every proposal shall be respected and maintained.

Please send requested documents on or before Thursday, 05 June 2003, to:

THE LAW FIRM OF
CHAN ROBLES & ASSOCIATES
Suite 2205-B, 22nd Floor, Philippine Stock
Exchange Centre Tektite East Tower
Exchange Road, Ortigas Center
Pasig City, Metro Manila
Tel. Nos. (632) 634-07-41 to 45
Fax No. (632) 634-07-36

PHILIPPINE NATIONAL CONSTRUCTION CORPORATION
Edsa Corner Reliance St., Mandaluyong City

Pre-Qualification Bids and Awards Committee

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Philippine National Construction Corporation (PNCC) invites interested contractors to apply for Eligibility and to bid for the:

Contract to Bid/Location No. 1 : Alabang Viaduct Rehabilitation and Upgrading 6 lanes, 1.1 km.
Estimated Construction Cost : P518,350,000.00
Proposed Contract Duration : Twelve (12) Months
Scope of Work : Concrete Bridge Rehabilitation and Upgrading
Source of Fund : Locally Funded

Contract to Bid/Location No. 2 : Calamba – Sto. Tomas Extension, 2 Lanes 7.8 km., including right-of-way
Estimated Construction Cost : P575,167,000.00
Proposed Contract Duration : Ten (10) Months
Scope of Work : Concrete Road Construction with 2 Concrete Bridges to Expressway standards
Source of Fund : Locally Funded

Application for Eligibility is open to PCAB-licensed contractors with Certificate of Registration and Classification as Large B for Roads and Bridges and has registered with the DPWH Registry of Civil Works Contractors. Contractors not yet registered with the said Registry should obtain their registration forms free of charge from the Department of Public Works and Highways (DPWH) – Bids and Awards Committee-Technical Working Group Office, 5th Floor DPWH Bldg., Port Area Manila and must submit to the same office the accomplished forms on or before **11 June 2003.**

Deadline for submission of Application for Eligibility : **16 June 2003.**

Bid documents will be available only to Eligible bidders for issuance starting on **23 June 2003** upon payment of non-refundable amount of P15,000.00 for Alabang Viaduct Rehabilitation Project and P20,000.00 for Calamba-Sto. Tomas Project.

Place of Issue : Philippine National Construction Corporation
Materials Management Division
Edsa Corner Reliance St., Mandaluyong City

Site Inspection is scheduled on **01 July 2003** and the **Pre-Bid Conference** is set on **07 July 2003** at PNCC Central Office Compound.

Duly accomplished Technical and Price Proposals for the project shall be placed in two (2) separate envelopes and shall be submitted to the above-mentioned Place of Issue not later than **10:00 A.M., 08 August 2003.**

All particulars relative to Eligibility, Bid Bond, Performance Bond, Pre-Bid Conference, Bid Evaluation and Award of Contract and other related matter will be governed by the provisions of R.A. 9184 and other applicable rules and regulations.

The PNCC reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any defect contained therein, and accept the offer most advantageous to the Government.

The PNCC assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify the bidders for any expense incurred in the preparation of their bids.

(Sgd.) MIRIAM M. PASETES
PBAC Chairman

(PDI – May 31 & June 6, 2003)

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CONSUELO "Conching" TESORO-DE LA VEGA

June 17, 1907 – May 30, 2003

of Dingras, Ilocos Norte; Project 4 & Blue Ridge, Quezon City

Peacefully rests in the Grace of the Lord at the age of 95
*as she joins her husband **Luis Dela Vega y Paredes** of Bangued, Abra* (†).

Her loving children, **Encarnacion** and **Placido Jr.** (†), **Rosita** and **Alberto** (†), **Dedeng** (†) & **Sinforoso** (†), **Naning** & **Libby**, **Luis Jr.** & **Cloty** (†), **Jose** & **Olive**, **Betty** & **Art**, **Ben** & **Baby**; her grandchildren, great grandchildren and great greatgrandchildren request the pious reader to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the mortuary of Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church, New Manila, Quezon City. Interment will be on Tuesday, 03 June 2003 at Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City after 9:00 a.m. Mass.

"Death is swallowed up in victory... thanks be to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." 1 Corinthians 15:54b, 57

We request you to join us in prayer as we, the family of

Juan Antonio Carrion y Saiz

Who peacefully passed away last Tuesday, May 27, 2003 at the age of 76,
Celebrate his journey home in the Grace of his beloved Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

He is survived by his children **Katrina, Maristella, Carmilla,** and **Arnel**; sister **Mari Juana**; grandchildren **BJ, Pep, Sunshine, Rafa, Beia, Melissa, Caroline,** and **Gabriella.**

Our deepest gratitude and appreciation to all of you, his countless, loving friends and relatives.

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son that whosoever believes in Him might not perish but have eternal life." John 3:16

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"I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me will live even though he dies, and whoever believes in Me will never die." (John 11:25-26)

So Lovingly Remembered
on the 21st Death Anniversary of Our Beloved

CORAZON SEVILLA VIRAY

who passed on to eternal life on 31 May 1982

The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass shall be offered at the following churches:

The Parish of the Lord Divine Mercy, *corner Mauuno & Madasalin Sts., Sikatuna Village, Q.C.*	6:00 PM
Parish of the Holy Sacrifice, *UP-Diliman, Quezon City*	6:00 PM
National Shrine of the Most Holy Rosary, *La Naval de Manila, Sto. Domingo Church*	6:00 PM

The family requests the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Anita "Aning" Cruz Ignacio

Wife of the late **Dr. Mario E. Ignacio** of Marikina City

Passed away in the Grace of our Lord on May 28, 2003 at the age of 89.

Her loving children **Marita & Rene, Corazon & Ernest, Moryet & Gely, Lito & Luz, David & Alda, Eric & Lydia,** and **Dondi & Minda**; grandchildren; great grandchildren; in-laws, relatives and friends mourn her passing away and request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at Guzman Memorial Chapel, J.P. Rizal St., Sto. Niño, Marikina City.

Interment will be today, May 31, 2003 at the Philippine Independent Cemetery, Concepcion, Marikina City after the 2:00 p.m. Mass at the Philippine Independent Church, Marikina City.

NATIVIDAD PADUA HIDALGO

of San Juan, La Union

Died on May 29, 2003 at the age of 91.

Her bereaved children **Liza, Tag & Melda, Bing & Sally**; grandchildren, great grandchildren, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the Loyola Memorial Chapels in Guadalupe, Makati City, until midnight of Saturday, May 31, 2003 after which she shall be transferred to La Union.

Interment will be on June 4, 2003 (Wednesday) at Lingsat, San Fernando, La Union.

"...absent with the body to be present with the Lord."

Matthew 10:39

Our Dearly Beloved Mother

ROSARIO E. MENDOZA

Died peacefully on May 29, 2003
at the age of 95.

Her loving children Lilia, Rudy & Liling, Rene, Letty & Paul, Ronnie & Rosie, Mandy & Lydia, and Myrna, and grandchildren & great grandchildren.

Her remains lie in state at the Arlington East, The Garden Chapels, C. Raymundo Ave. cor. Mercedes Avenue, San Miguel, Pasig City.

Interment will be on Sunday, June 01, 2003 at 9:00 a.m. at the Manila Memorial Park, Sucat Road, Parañaque City.

Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it. Matthew 10:39

CLASSIFIEDS

SUBIC BAY METROPOLITAN AUTHORITY
BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE
Building 255 Barryman Road, Subic Bay Freeport Zone, Philippines 2222
TEL. NOS. (047) 252-4270 * 4214 * 4124 FAX NO. (047) 252-4284

INVITATION TO BID

All parties interested to bid for the below-listed project are invited to apply for application for eligibility and to bid with the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority (SBMA), Subic Bay Freeport Zone. Only eligible contractors/suppliers will be invited to participate in the public bidding of the below-listed project;

A. PROJECT : **ASPHALT CONCRETE OVERLAY OF CHARLIE TAXIWAY AT SUBIC BAY INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT**

B. Services to be performed include:

Furnish deliver, lay, roll and compact asphalt concrete for the overlay of Charlie Taxiway at Subic Bay International Airport. Other works includes cleaning and preparation of asphalt surface to be overlaid, application of tack coat, curing and the subsequent overlaying of 2" thick asphalt concrete to the specified grade and testing of the laid asphalt for conformity to the required quality. The construction method and schedules of overlaying shall be subject to the approval of the SBMA Representative.

At the end of every working period the area shall be cleaned and prepared for airport operations. Temporary asphalt ramps shall be provided for the operation of the airport at the end of every working period. However, this would be subsequently removed during \the continuation of the construction.

Miscellaneous items as required for construction in airports shall be provided and the applicable rules and regulations shall be strictly followed. Detailed scope of work/services for the project will be provided upon issuance of bidding documents to all eligible contractors.

C. Approved Budget Cost: **PHP 9,999,917.69**

D. Application for Eligibility and to Bid is open to all eligible contractors/suppliers. Prospective bidders are required to submit a letter of intent and certified true copy of the following documents:

1. Article of Incorporation, if applicable
2. Securities & Exchange Commission (SEC) Registration
3. Certificate of Registration with the Dept. of Trade and Industry (if not Corporation)
4. Valid Mayor's Permit
5. VAT Registration
6. Audited Financial Statement for the last two (2) years (stamped by BIR or its duly accredited/authorized banks, certified true copy
7. PCAB Principal Qualification and Category:
   General Engineering B"
   King of Project and Respective Ranges
   Roads, Highway, Pavement, Bridges "MA"
8. Company PROFILE
9. List of Similar Projects (Past/Present)

E. Deadline of submission of Application for Eligibility to bid is on *June 16, 2003* at 5:00 p.m. at BAC Secretariat Office, PPMD, Bldg. 255, Barryman Road, Subic Bay Freeport Zone.

F. Time and date of submission/opening of bids and pre-Bid conference shall be confirmed through Bid Bulletin.

Bid documents shall be issued only to the eligible contractor duly notified by SBMA in writing upon payment of the non-refundable cost for bid documents.

All parties relative to the eligibility process, bidding, evaluation of bids and award of contract shall be governed by the Amended Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) for the Procurement of Supplies and Materials.

(Sgd.) **Atty. CHITO M. CRUZ**
Chairman, BAC

(PDI - May 31 & June 7, 2003)

Invitation for Bids

Social Expenditure Management Loan II
Department of Health, Philippines

SUPPLY AND DELIVERY OF TB LABORATORY SUPPLIES

IFB No. WB-SEMP2-2003-002

1. The Government of the Philippines has received a loan from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development toward the cost of Social Expenditure Management Loan II, and it intends to apply part of the proceeds of this loan to payments under the contract for which this invitation for bids is issued.
2. The Department of Health now invites sealed bids from eligible bidders for the supply and delivery of TB Laboratory Supplies as follows:

Item No.	Description	Quantity	Unit
1	TB Staining Kit	17,053	Kit
2	Microscopic Immersion Oil	18,092	Bottle
3	Glass Slides	100,172	Box
4	Sputum Cups	5,466,637	Piece

3. Bidding will be conducted throught the national competitive bidding procedures specified in the World Bank's Guidelines: Procurement under IBRD Loans and IDA Credits, and is open to all bidders from eligible source countries as defined in the Guidelines.
4. Interested eligible bidders may obtain further information from the Procurement and Logistics Service, Bldg. No. 26, Department of Health, San Lazaro Compound, Sta. Cruz, Manila and inspect the bidding documents from **June 9 to July 5, 2003**, 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM.
5. A complete set of bidding documents in English may be purchased by interested bidders on the submission of a written application to the address above and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Five Thousand Pesos (PhP5,000.00) or US$150 including air courier for foreign bidders. The method of payment will be cash, or bank draft. If payment is in form of a bank draft, the check should be to the account of the Department of Health. Information including names of potential bidders and contact persons telephone and facsimile numbers, cable, e-mail and mailing address should be provided in the application to facilitate communications during the bidding process.
6. Bids must be delivered to the address below before 9:30 a.m. on **July 14, 2003.** All bids must be accompanied by a bid security of not less than 2.5% of total bid. Late bids will be rejected outright and returned unopened to the bidder.
7. Prior to bid opening, a pre-bidding conference will be held at the HHRDB Conference Room, at 9:30 a.m. on **June 30, 2003**.
8. Bids will be opened in the presence of the bidders' representatives who choose to attend at the HHRDB Conference Room, 3rd Floor, Bldg. No. 12-A, Department of Health, San Lazaro Compound, Sta. Cruz, Manila at 9:31 a.m. on **July 14, 2003.**
9. The Department of Health reserves the right to reject any or all bids without disclosing any reason, to waive any minor defects or infirmities and to accept such bids as may be considered advantageous to DOH.

(Sgd.) **ALEXANDER A. PADILLA**
Undersecretary of Health
Chairperson, Central Office Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI--May 31 & July 7, 2003)

SUBIC BAY METROPOLITAN AUTHORITY
BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE
Building 255 Barryman Road, Subic Bay Freeport Zone, Philippines 2222
TEL. NOS. (047) 252-4270 * 4214 * 4124 FAX NO. (047) 252-4284

May 26, 2003

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

All parties interested to bid for the below-listed items are invited to apply for application for eligibility and to bid with the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority (SBMA), Subic Bay Freeport Zone. Only eligible contractors/suppliers will be invited to participate in the bidding of the below-listed items/projects:

A. ITEMS TO BID

	QTY.	U/I	ITEMS DESCRIPTION	APPROVED BUDGET COST
I	1	LOT	SUPPLY AND MATERIALS FOR REHABILITATION OF KALAYAAN TENNIS COURT	P 679,370.00
II	1	LOT	SERVICES AND MATERIALS TO FURNISH, DELIVER, LAY, ROLL & CORRECT ASPHALT CEMENT AND ASPHALT TENNIS COURT, COLOR COATING WITH 3MM THICK CUSHION RESURF ACER FOR REHABILITATION OF KALAYAAN TENNIS COURT	P 1,498,285.00
III	1	UN	RUBBER FLYING INFLATABLE BOAT	P 1,258,400.00
IV	1	LOT	BATTERY PACK FOR HANDHELD RADIOS	P 855,700.00

B. Complete specification/detailed technical description of the subject items to bid will be provided upon issuance of bidding documents to all eligible suppliers/contractors.

C. Application Particulars for Eligibility is open to all Contractors with the following requirements:

1. Letter of Intent
2. Article of Incorporation
3. Securities & Exchange Commission (SEC) Registration
4. Certificate of Registration with the Dept. of Trade and Industry (If not Corporation)
5. Valid Mayor's Permit
6. BIR VAT Registration
7. Audited Financial Statement for the last two (2) years (stamped received by BIR or its duly accredited/authorized banks, certified true copy)
8. Presence of Exclusive/Authorized/Sole Distributorship Agreement (for the items to bid)
9. PCAB License (for Construction Services, Category General Engineering B)
10. Company PROFILE
11. List of Products Carried
12. List of Clients

D. Deadline of submission of Accomplished for Eligibility to bid: **June 11, 2003, 5:00 p.m.** at BAC Secretariat Office, PPMD, Bldg. 255, Barryman Road, Subic Bay Freeport Zone.

E. Time and date of Pre-Bid Conference, Submission and Opening of Bids, shall be confirmed through Bid Bulletin.

Bid documents shall be issued only to the eligible contractor duly notified by SBMA in writing upon payment of the non-refundable cost for bid documents.

All particulars relative to the eligibility process, bidding, evaluation of bids and award of contract shall be governed by Amended Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) for the procurement of Supplies and Materials.

SBMA reserves the right to reject any and all bids, waive any defect therein and accept the offer it deems most advantageous to the Government.

(Sgd.) **Atty. CHITO M. CRUZ**
Chairman

(PDI - May 31 & June 7, 2003)

PLDT CyberMadness goes to SM

PLDT, in cooperation with technology partners and the biggest PC vendors in the country, offers the lowest priced PCs and laptops, bundled with either a PLDT Vibe or my DSL Internet subscription at the PLDT CyberMadness.

PLDT CyberMadness is the biggest PLDT-PC Internet Festival happening this May 30, 31 and June 1 at Upper Level Activity Center, SM Megamall. It is a one-stop event where you can get brand new PCs and laptops, PLDT Internet subscription, computer accessories and even PLDT Hype phones.

"We firmly believe in PLDT's endeavor in making PCs with internet access affordable to as many Filipino households and support the nationwide rollout of PLDT CyberMadness stating in SM Megamall and various SM Malls nationwide," says Mr. Ricky Lim, Senior Vice President of SM.

Be more productive this school year! Don't miss this opportunity to get brand new PCs for as low as P14,999.00 and laptops for P54,999 when you get a PLDT Vibe or myDSL Internet subscription. You can also enjoy Citibank's PayLite Zero Interest 12 month Installment Program, and pay only P1,249/month for PCs and P4,583/month for laptops.

Asthma deaths on the rise

THE NUMBER of people dying from asthma is growing and hospital admissions are increasing especially in children.

This was revealed by the US Center for Disease Control and Prevention which said that the number of people with asthma has increased 75 percent while the death rate has increased 40 percent since 1982. In the United States alone, over 15 million people have asthma and over 5,000 die each year.

Asthma is also responsible for increasing hospital admissions among children. In the Philippines, it is the main cause of emergency room consultations. Worldwide, over 100 million people have asthma and over 8 million Filipinos have the disease.

Asthma is a chronic inflammatory disease in which the airways become inflamed and swollen. As the narrow airways are clogged by extra mucus, breathing becomes difficult. Attacks are usually triggered by physical or chemical substances to which a person is sensitive to. These include house mites, cockroaches, pollen and molds, animal hair and air pollutants.

A person with sensitive airways reacts to these "asthma triggers" and may experience wheezing, a feeling of tightness in the chest or shortness of breath. In children, coughing may be the only symptom of the disease. Children below two years old are especially prone to wheezing because they have smaller airways that are easily obstructed by the accumulation of excessive secretions often seen in asthma.

Proper education is a must in the management of asthma. Knowing everything about the disease, keeping a diary of attacks and symptoms, and avoiding one's asthma triggers are as important as taking one's medicines regularly to be able to live a normal, productive life.

Asthma medications include steroids to control inflammation of the airways and bronchodilators to manage the asthma attack. Inhaled bronchodilators like salbutamol have been the standard treatment in acute attacks because of their fast action, greater efficacy and less side effects. Despite the effectiveness of salbutamol, however, many children continue to have undesirable airway obstruction hospital admission.

In an award-winning local study, it was shown through a randomized double-blind design that the combination drug ipratropium and salbutamol can reduce hospitalization rates by 62 percent in wheezing infants.

The researchers, led by Drs. Cecile Gallego and Mike Javier of the San Juan de Dios Hospital (SJDH), said the combination drug (ipratropium and salbutamol) - known locally as Combivent - is more effective and safe than salbutamol alone in reversing wheezing attacks in infants aged two months to two years old.

Of the 60 infants included in the study, the researchers, using a validated asthma scoring system, noted significant improvements in the asthma severity of the infants that received both ipratropium and salbutamol. The maximum effect was seen after giving three doses of the combination drug.

Asian Institute of Management
School of Development Management
MDM Network • MDM 2003
International Development Management Conference
LEADERSHIP AND DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT
STRATEGIES FOR EFFECTIVE SOCIAL CHANGE
KEYNOTE ADDRESS: HON. FIDEL V. RAMOS
AIM Conference Center

NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT
Philippine Daily Inquirer president Sandy Prieto-Romualdez delivers her speech on 'The Impact of Communications in Development Management' during the first day of the 1st National Conference on Development Management. Ms Prieto-Romualdez was one of many experts invited to speak in this national conference which carried the theme 'Leadership and Development Management Strategies for Effective Social Change.' With her in this first-day session were (from left) lawyer Rafael Hipolito Sr., Consolation Manding, SPC and Allan Ambil of the Asian Institute of Management (AIM) Masters in Development Management (MDM) program. The conference was hosted by the AIM's School of Development Management and was one of the highlights of the weeklong activities which kicked-off the AIM's 35th Anniversary celebration.

CYBERLINK NOW IN PARANAQUE
Ronald Magleo, a Business Management and an honor graduate of De La Salle University and John Patrick Ramirez, a B.S. Mathematics graduate of De La Salle University, have just been appointed area coordinators of Cyberlink Worldwide Network Inc. in Parañaque. Cyberlink is a full facility e-commerce and high-speed wireless internet service provider. Shown from left, Ronald Magleo, Michael Soriano, president of Cyberlink and John Patrick Ramirez, during the inauguration of their office, Comet Avenue Network Inc., at 44 J. Soledad Ave., Bgy. Don Bosco, Parañaque City. For any service inquiry, you may call Comet Ave. Network at tel. no. 776-2060 or cellphone 0917-813-4828.

Filipino is on dean's list at Berklee College of Music

BERKLEE College of Music in Boston recently announced Filipino saxophone major student, Anthony Morris as a dean's lister for the fall semester of the 2002 - 2003 academic year. A full time student at Berklee, Morris achieved a grade point average within the 3.4 or above requirement of the college.

Tracing his roots from Orani Bataan, Morris aims to continue mastering his craft and make a name internationally as a top Filipino sax player. Prior to pursuing further studies in Berklee, Morris has already created a career involvement in the following: founder of the Morris Jazz Band, principal sax player of the UP Symphonic Band, alto sax player and soloist of the UP Jazz Big Band Ensemble, member - alto sax and flute soloist of the Metro Jazz Orchestra and sax player member of the SMPO which accompanied the Michael Legrand concert in Manila.

Morris was also the musical arranger and at the same time, alto sax, flute and keyboard player of the Afro-Latin band, Wahijuara which regularly played in different Jazz night spots and became a crowd top favorite.

The Berklee College of Music focuses on practical career preparations for today's music talents like Morris. Four-year degrees are offered in Performance, Jazz Composition, Music Production and Engineering, Film Scoring, Music Business / Management, Composition, Music Synthesis, Contemporary Writing and Production, Music Education, Songwriting, Music Therapy and Professional Music.

Established in 1945, Berklee College of Music in Boston is the world's largest independent music college and has become the international singular learning lab for the music of today and tomorrow.

Lotus and Assunta: The ultimate combination

LOTUS Ultimate Writing Instruments has tapped multi-awarded celebrity Assunta de Rossi to endorse its products. Lotus has always been at the forefront of developing quality writing instruments at consumer-friendly prices. Its line includes the new Lotus regular ballpen, needlepoint, retractogel, techpen, highlighters and permanent markers. Assunta will be seen on television commercials, print ads in daily broadsheets and mall tours endorsing Lotus writing instruments. This back to schools season livens up as you go back to school with Lotus and Assunta; the ultimate combination.

A mall tour is currently being planned for Assunta timed to coincide with the back to school season.

Lotus will also have a back-to-school segment at the popular morning television show Magandang Umaga Bayan aired over ABS-CBN. In the segment, kids will be shown how Lotus ballpens can be used for fun and exciting artworks.

It's back to school with Crayola

CRAYOLA crayons are a regular part of parent's buying lists every back-to-school season for their kids. Children just love the attractive colors of Crayola. Crayola crayons come in 8's, 16's, 24's, 48's and 64's. There is also Crayola So Big crayons for younger kids.

Recently, the National Consumers Choice Foundation awarded Crayola crayons with its Consumers Choice Award for being the Top Crayon Brand of the Year for the year 2002. The award highlights Crayola's commitment in enhancing the Filipino children's power of creativity through the use of crayons in letting their imaginations soar. Aside from enhancing children's creative minds, Crayola also looks out for the children's health by making sure that all Crayola products are non-toxic and safe for kids of all ages. Amalgamated Specialties Corp. (Amspec) manufactures Crayola and other school and office supplies.

Crayola currently has an ongoing segment in the popular morning television show Magandang Umaga Bayan aired over ABS-CBN. Kids are taught fun and exciting art projects on television using Crayola products. The segment is conducted by Crayola's professional artists.

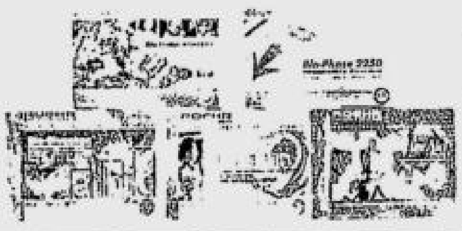
Crayola products are advertised regularly on television, radio, newspapers and magazines. All products are guaranteed safe and non-toxic.

There is only one
Crayola
Crayola
Crayola
So Big
The others are just crayons.

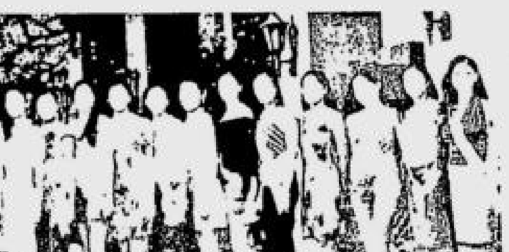
ProductFILES

Roehr nature+science

Roehr nature+science combines Mother Nature's most nourishing and potent herbs into every tablet of Bio-Fruits 'n Greens, Bio-BitterAid, Bio-Statin, Bio-Phase 2250 and Bio-Glucoban. Backed-up by scientific research and clinical studies, all Roehr nutraceutical products are standardized extracts of natural raw herbs, produced in conformity with current Good Manufacturing Practice (cGMP), which guarantees potency consistency in proportion to the exact amount of active ingredients extracted, which provides the therapeutic benefits. Roehr products also cater to specific health requirements, such as weight loss, immune system enhancement, anti-oxidants (anti-aging), cardio vascular health, diabetes management, mood enhancement, osteoporosis, menopause, and or oral/ dental care.



COKE FOR 'A DREAM CONCERT'
Coca Cola Co., new Pagcor and PJI support Viva Hot Babes' A Dream Concert scheduled today, 9:00 p.m. at Casino Filipino Parañaque. This is for the benefit of the Rotary Club medical and dental missions in Parañaque City. First one hundred ticket buyers will get assorted items of Coca Cola products when bought at Marylouise International Productions office at tel. no. 840-3745. Other ticket outlets are at SM Ticketnet and all Casino Filipino branches. Sexy stars of the group are composed of Maui Taylor, Katya Santos, Andrea del Rosario, Kristine Jaca, Gwen Garci, Jen Rosendahl, Myles Hernandez, Hazel Cabrera and Pam Sarmiento. They will perform under the direction of Al Marcelo.



SWARM OF BEAUTIES AT THE SULO HOTEL
Twenty-four young women vying for the 2003 Mutya ng Pilipinas title take time out from a fun shoot to pose for a souvenir photo at The Sulo Hotel driveway. The Mutya beauties will be staying at the hotel until June 9 as their official residence. The coronation night will be held today at the AFP Theater. Deemed as the premiere business hotel in Quezon City, The Sulo Hotel is located along Matalino Road, Diliman Civic Center. For inquiries and reservations, call 924-5051 to 71.

Bits Clips

Garfield celebrates its 25th birthday

TODAY, Garfield will celebrate its 25th birthday at the Activity Center of Glorietta Mall, Ayala center, Makati City. Party starts at 11:00 a.m. and ends at 6:00 p.m. Expect a lot of fun, food and fellowship on this 7-hour party. Chico and Delamar will host this event and will be graced by Bantay Bata kids. Cat lovers will surely enjoy the Cat Show featuring the best cats in the Philippines. For more information, call 732-5141 to 47 locals 210 - 211 and look for Aleli or Elsie. Garfield is exclusively distributed by Richwell Trading Corporation located at #25 Quezon Ave., Quezon City.

Sunnex's kitchen promo

CATCH the last day of Sunnex's (the leading kitchenware brand) promo today. Every purchase of a 4-piece Cookware Combo worth P799.75 entitles the customer to a P199.75 discount, plus a free cooking spoon worth P199.75. When you buy a 5-piece Pretty Series Cookware or a 5 piece Deluxe Series Cookware, you get a 3-piece stainless steel Mix-N-Store bowl set for free. Or avail of the 5 piece Regal Series Cookware or a 5-piece Crown Series Cookware, both of which come with an elegant Sunnex steel watch worth P1,499.75.

Tuklas Talino 2003

THE HENRY Martin School of Music located at #9 Sarmiento St., Niugan, Malabon City will hold its annual recital entitled "Tuklas Talino 2003: A voice and guitar recital" on Sunday, June 1 at 4:30 p.m. at the Philamlife Theatre, United Nations Ave., Manila. The recital will feature Angelika Dela Cruz, as a special guest artist, who is a product of the Henry Martin School of Music. The said recital will be choreographed by Francis Martin Comez and will be directed by Ernie Dela Cruz, father of Angelika.

Noted cardiologist speaks at convention

CYPHER Sirolimus-eluting Stent (the first US-FDA-approved combination drug device intended to help reduce re-blockage of a treated coronary artery): how this came about and its impact on the treatment of coronary artery disease (CADs) among other things, will be reported by Dato Seri Dr. Robaayah Zambahari, as she speaks at the 34th Annual Convention of the Philippine Heart Association (PHA) at Edsa Shangri-La Hotel between May 28 to 31. She has been invited by Johnson & Johnson Medical Philippines (JJMP) to deliver the good news to Filipino heart doctors, as well as to Filipino heart patients in the face of rising mortality rates caused by heart problems. She heads the Department of Cardiology at the Institut Jantung Negara, the premier institute in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Those interested in Cypher may call Johnson & Johnson at 824-7901 local 8750.

Bag a Jag at SM malls

GRAB a Jag and get a free bag at selected SM Super Malls only until today. For a minimum single receipt purchase worth P300 of Jag Thug, you will receive a free drawstring bag from Jag Jeans. Don't miss this great Jag giveaway by shopping at any Jag store in the following SM Super Malls: SM City, SM Megamall, SM Centerpoint, SM Bacoor, SM Harisson, SM Fairview, SM Southmall, SM YMCA, SM Bicutan, SM Cubao, SM Makati and SM San Fernando.

A refreshing treat from Refresh and Dowell

MOTHERS will be delighted to know that when they go to the supermarket and purchase a blender made by Dowell household appliances, distributed by Collins International Trading Corp., they automatically get a free 45g litro pack Refresh instant drink mix. What's more, the whole family gets to have a free sampling of the distinctive "dalandan" taste that Refresh fruit drink is known for when they drop by the demo area. The promo is until today, which can be found in major department stores, appliance centers and other major dealers nationwide.

GSIS anniversary raffle

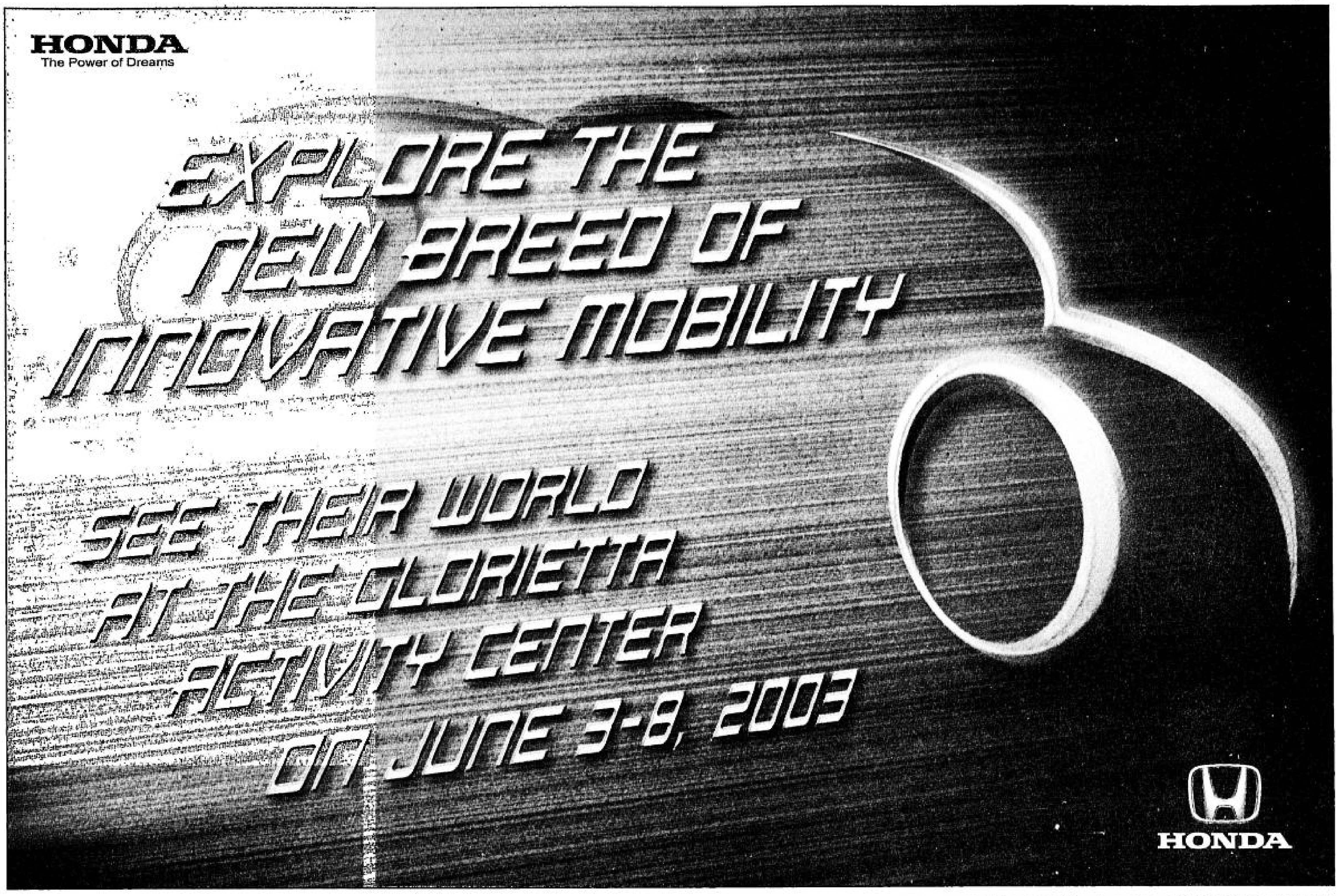
FORTY government employees will receive a cash prize of P20,000 each when the Government Service Insurance System (GSIS) celebrates its 66th year of founding on May 31. The GSIS board of trustees approved the grant of P20,000 cash prize to 40 GSIS member-winners who will be determined through a computerized raffle as part of its anniversary activity. To be eligible as winner, the GSIS member's premium and other loan(s) payment(s) should be updated as of the end of April 2003. The winners will be informed through a telegram to be sent to the office or home address of the active members or the last known address of the retiree.

3-in-1 offer from Citibank

APPLY for a Citibank credit card and get three exciting freebies with its sizzling 3-in-1 offer. (1) Free annual fee for the first year. Get your Citibank credit card for free on the first year when you apply on or before May 31. (2) Free summer bag. You can have Citibank's red-hot duffle bag for free with an approved Citibank credit car application. This accessory will be sent to you within 30 days upon arrival of your Citibank card. (3) A chance to win a Kodak digital camera. All approved applications during the promotion period will have a chance to win one of 40 Kodak cameras up for grabs. Apply now for a Citibank credit card and avail of this offer. Call 423-3000 today or log on to www.citibank.com.ph.

GTF presents recital

GANTIMPALA Theater Foundation (GTF), in cooperation with the National Parks Development Committee (NPDC), present its Summer Theater Workshop Culminating Recital slated on May 30, 4:00 p.m., (children's theater class) and today, 6:00 p.m. (basic acting for teens and young adults class), at the Concert at the Park auditorium, Luneta, Manila. The GTF Summer Theater Workshop is an annual activity, which provides students and theater enthusiasts the opportunity and experience to study the basics of theater as an artistic expression. GTF president and artistic director is Tony Espejo, workshop facilitators for this year are Bodjie Pascua, Adriana Agcaoli and Roobak Valle. Production manager is Dell Cayetano. For details, call 528, 0603 or 0918-9212866 and look for Alwin M. Ignacio.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SEE THEIR WORLD
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ACTIVITY CENTER
ON JUNE 3-8, 2003
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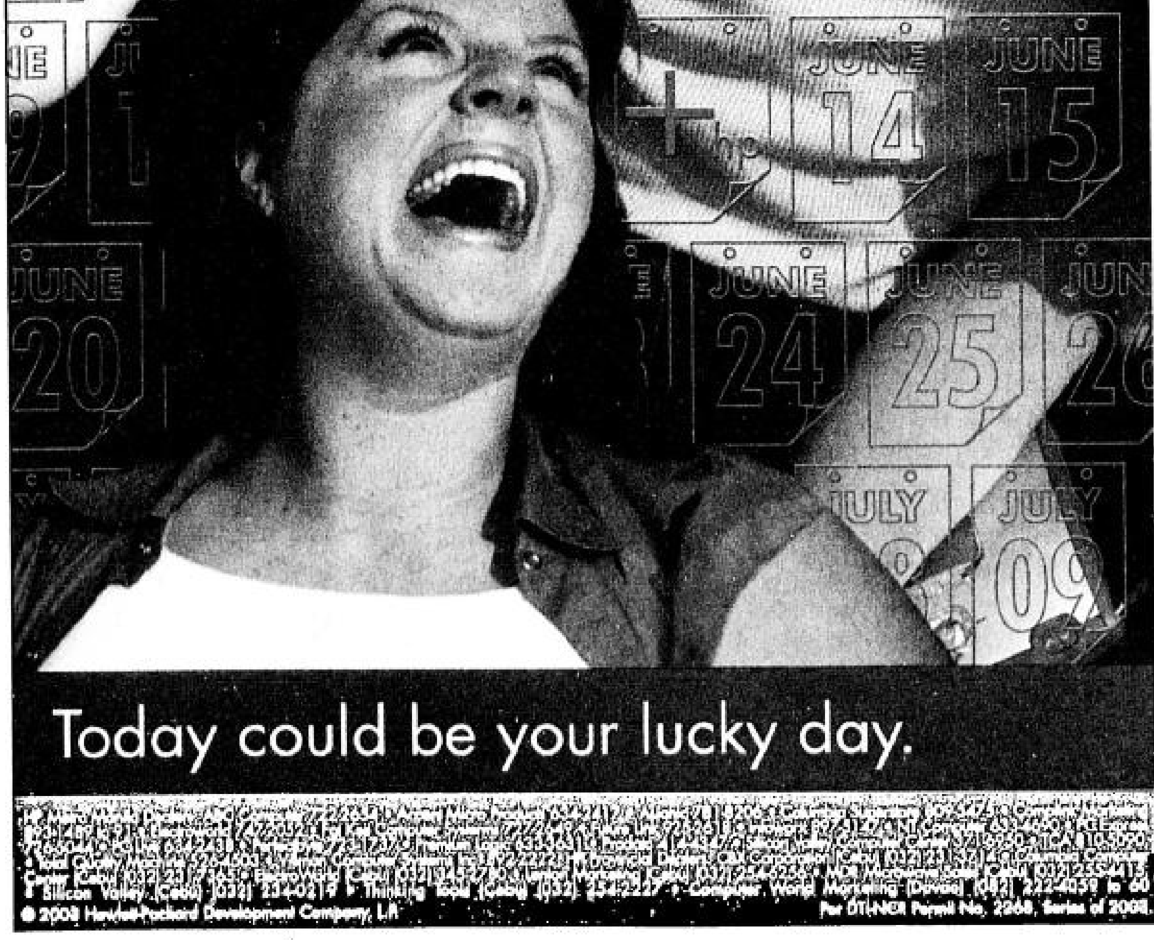
MAY 30
MAY 31
JUNE
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JUNE 03
JUNE 04
JUNE 14
JUNE 15
JUNE 20
JUNE 24
JUNE 25
JULY
JULY 09

Today could be your lucky day.

Get a chance to win your money back in HP's Payback Raffle Promo! Just buy any of the participating HP Deskjet, HP Photosmart and HP All-in-one printers and text in your entries for a chance to win back the amount you paid for.

Simply key in *HP <KeyCode> <Full Name> <Invoice Number> <Date of Purchase (MMDD)> <Serial Number>* and send to 2284 for Smart and 2383 for Globe* (i.e. HP DJ3325 JOSE REYES 01234 0531 0123456789). For corporate entries, the company name should be written as the full name.

With one winner for each day of the promo, you have more chances of winning! Promo runs from May 30 to July 31, 2003. So hurry, contact your nearest HP dealer today. See posters for details.

Participating HP printers	KeyCode
Deskjet 3325	DJ3325
Deskjet 3420	DJ3420
Deskjet 5550	DJ5550
Deskjet 6122	DJ6122
Photosmart 7550	PS7550
Photosmart130	PS130
PSC1210	PSC1210
Officejet 5110	OJ5110
PSC 2110	PSC2110
PSC 2210	PSC2210

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*Smart pertains to all Smart Communications carriers: Smart Buddy, Smart Gold, Talk 'n' Text and Addict Mobile. Globe pertains to Globe Telecom and Globe Prepaid. Corresponding tarriff rates for SMS are: Globe Post Paid - P2.00/message; Globe Prepaid, Smart Prepaid, Smart Post Paid - P2.50/message

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or call HP Customer Service at (632) 867-3557 or Toll-free 1-800-1331-4488
or email ph.contact@hp.com

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Editor Nestor U. Torre Associate Editor Edmund L. Sicam

SATURDAY Special

HOPE. Gave up many Christmas to entertain US troops based in other countries.

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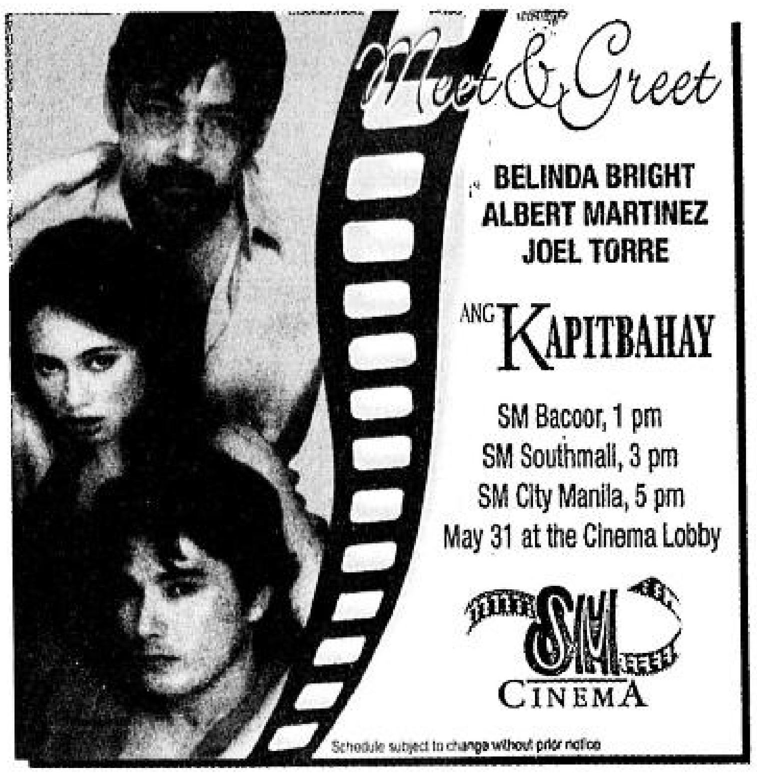

Meet & Greet
BELINDA BRIGHT
ALBERT MARTINEZ
JOEL TORRE
ANG KAPITBAHAY
SM Bacoor, 1 pm
SM Southmall, 3 pm
SM City Manila, 5 pm
May 31 at the Cinema Lobby
SM CINEMA
Schedule subject to change without prior notice

Bob Hope hits 100

By Nestor U. Torre

JUST like George Burns some years before him, comedian Bob Hope has hit 100 (last May 29), further confirming the notion that laughter is the best medicine-or fountain of youth (well, for survival, anyway).

One-liners

The British-born entertainer has become as American as the caustic cracks and one-liners he used to dish out ack-ack style before he officially retired from performing a decade ago, on his 90th birthday.

He became famous after he made a series of "road" movies with Bing Crosby, became a hit as one of the pioneering comics on television, got stars to regularly entertain US troops overseas during the Christmas season, and hosted a number of Oscar awards rites.

Last May 29, NBC aired the birthday tribute "100 Years of Hope and Humor," and other centennial honors are planned, like renaming the famous intersection of Hollywood and Vine as Bob Hope Square.

Touring exhibit

Also in the works: a "comedy party" for Hope at the Library of Congress (!?), hosted by Alan King and Dick Cavett, as well as a touring exhibit of Hope's memorabilia.

Younger people may wonder what all the fuss over Bob Hope is all about. Comedians are a dime a dozen on the big and small screens, so what makes Hope so special?

We think it's his combination of ack-ack delivery, contemporary jokes, and big heart.

His delivery is crisp and crackling, and adds vim and zap to even the weariest joke. As a result, viewers get more humor from Hope then from many other comedians, and they're grateful for the extra treats.

Contemporary humor

The fact that Hope's jokes are contemporary makes them more pointed and relevant, so viewers feels that they're getting something new, hot off the news pages and written especially for them, instead of something rehashed.

It also helps that Bob dishes out these jokes in his signature deadpan manner, leaving the laughing to his listeners—unlike other comedians who giggle over their own cracks so much that their audience can't get the punchlines. Unlike those rank amateurs, Hope was a professional, and knew that it was his job to make people laugh, not to compete with their laughter.

Frequent choice

Hope was a frequent choice as host of the annual Oscar awards because he knew the entertainment scene in and out, so he could make the most astute comic comments about it.

Also, he kept the proceedings lively with his acerbic asides, cracking up both stars and viewers alike with his irreverent one-liners about the puffed-up characters who make the global show biz scene such a diverting circus.

But it's Hope's big heart that really sets him apart from his peers in the world of comedy. Unlike other stellar comics who raise funds for all sorts of foundations by doing benefit shows in glitzy venues, Hope constantly flew to the most dangerous war-torn places on earth to warm the hearts of US troops at wintertime.

Christmas season

The fact that Bob and his other stellar troupe members performed during the Christmas season made their shows even more special for the US soldiers—and a bigger sacrifice for the entertainers, because they had to give up their own Christmas celebrations with their families to make other people happy.

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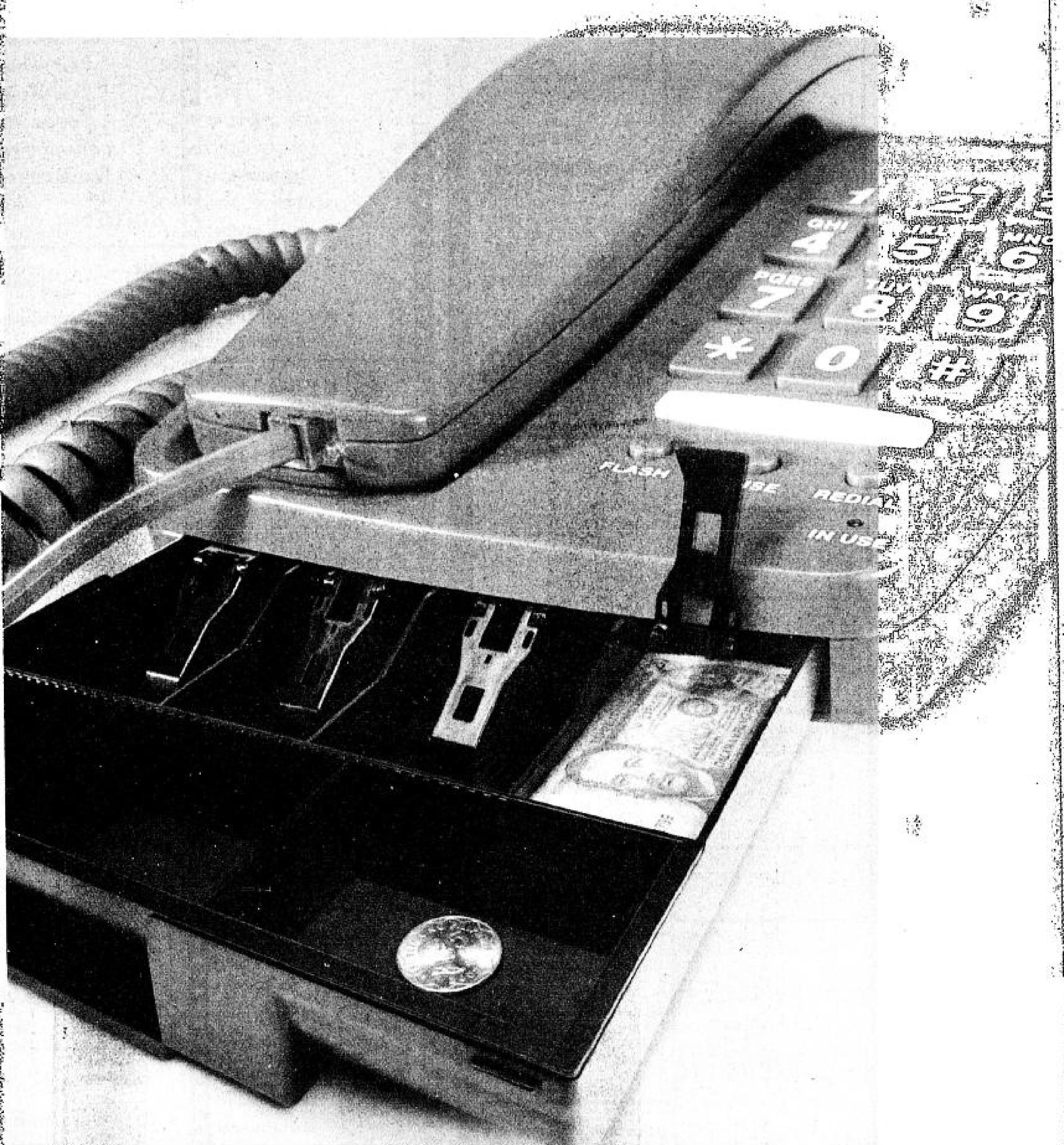

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'Flower Drum Song's' male lead to record album here

By Edmund L. Sicam

THE PHILIPPINES first heard of Jose Llana as the leading man of Lea Salonga in the musical "Flower Drum Song," which had a run on Broadway after a successful stint in Los Angeles. Filipinos once again staked their claim as being a musically gifted race.

Concerts

Today, Llana is in the Philippines to record an all-Filipino album for Viva Music, and to do a series of concerts as well. Jose says he is thrilled to be home, and is especially excited to do the album, where 11 out of the 14 songs will be in Filipino. The album will feature songs by George Canseco, Willy Cruz, Louie Ocampo, Ryan Cayabyab, Ogie Alcasid, Danny Tan and others. Jose admits though that he is not very fluent in Tagalog. "It's very rusty. I've been living in the States for 24 years now, but give me a couple more weeks. I've only been here for five days," he grins.

Llana says he has already listened to the songs that he will be recording. "I've got some favorites now, like 'Kailangan Kita' by Ogie Alcasid." Jose is especially thrilled that Louie Ocampo allowed him to record a song that he wrote for his wife on the occasion of their anniversary. "(The title is) 'To Love You Once Again', and I'm the first artist to record the song!"

Carrier single

According to the Broadway star, this song will most probably be the carrier single.

Jose was born in Quezon City and was three years old when his family moved to the United States. He says it came as somewhat of a surprise that he became a stage actor. Jose shares that his grandparents were Math professors. "My sister and I were bred to be engineers. We're supposed to be mathematicians and physicists."

But Jose disclosed that when his father was in college at UP, he was part of a band. "When I was a kid, every Saturday morning we would wake up and, while every other kid would watch cartoons, I would go down to the living room with my dad and he would be playing his guitar singing Beatles and Simon and Garfunkel. That's what I grew up singing with him." Watching the musical "Les Miserables" sparked the desire in him to become an actor.

He went to the Manhattan School of Music after high school, and he studied opera for a year. "I hated it!" he says with a grimace. "I went for the discipline. Opera students, they prepare, they study, they just practice, practice, practice, and that's the kind of education I wanted to get.

"But when I got there, I got the discipline, but I found it very constricting, very tight. They wouldn't let me sing musical theater, or take acting or dance classes. They said, only opera. I didn't like that," he says, cringing.

Spring break

So, at the end of the year, he had set his sights on transferring to the World Academy of Music in London. But, during the spring break, he "snuck into" an audition of "King and I." "I pretended I was somebody else. I wasn't supposed to be there. It was an agent submission for Equity, for union members, and I was so young, only 18.

I snuck in and I sang for them. They thought I was somebody else, so I thought I was going to get into trouble. I thought they were going to arrest me!

"But the casting director was very impressed that I did that, that I took the risk to go and sing for them. About four months later, they had me sing with Lou Diamond (Philips, who played the King of Siam), and all the Rodgers and Hammerstein people, and that's how I got my first job." He was cast as Lun Tha, and got to sing the classic love songs "I Have Dreamed" and "We Kiss in a Shadow."

This turn of events caught him by surprise. "I was waiting on tables, I was just this punk! I swear, I thought I was gonna go into the audition and sing and say 'Thank you very much,' go home and watch TV. But it just sort of exploded from there, and it was a very good experience!"

Right time

"I was very lucky," Jose says. But he says he deserved the role as well. "I was in the right place at the right time but I had studied enough, I had the right voice, I had the right talent, I had the right skill, and everything has to come at the right time.

"You can be the most talented singer, but not (have) the right show. You have to learn that as a performer, in New York especially.

"Even though you may be the best singer in a room with 10 guys, you may not be right for the part. Someone else will get the part—they're not as good a singer, but they look the part more."

LLANA (right) sings a duet with Lea Salonga in "Flower Drum Song."

After that, he performed in other musicals—as "Guillaume" in Cameron Mackintosh's "Martin de Guerre" and as "Angel" in "Rent."

He says he thoroughly enjoyed playing Angel, the transvestite with a big heart. "It was a dream! Everyone knew 'Rent' and to come aboard and play such a beautiful character, it was a lot of fun! I'd never worn heels, a wig and make-up, but it was fun! I got to be a different person."

Jose is thankful that he has been given a lot of breaks that have not been given to many actors, especially Asian talents in America. In fact, he is known in Manhattan as the actor who gets all kinds of roles, even those not usually given to Asians.

"I've been very lucky. The casting directors right away cast me in roles that were not meant for Asian people, and in musical theater, TV and film, it's very hard. But in musical theater, if you can sing and dance, they'll put you in a role that's not meant for Asians."

Daniel Bedingfield's debut album is solid enough

By Noelani Torre

TWENTY-TWO-YEAR-OLD singer and songwriter Daniel Bedingfield describes his debut album "Gotta Get Thru This" (Polydor) "as what it would sound like if Sting and Michael Jackson and Stevie Wonder were in a basement, jamming together."

Arrogance

Do we concur? After listening several times to this CD, we don't. It's solid and polished enough, but it certainly cannot equal the output of even one of the music scene's abovementioned leading lights—let alone all three! That he places himself on their level smacks of arrogance.

Putting such considerations aside, however we must say that Bedingfield's freshman endeavor, though not especially brilliant, has some pretty effective hooks that can drag the listener in—whether she wants to be dragged or not.

Our chap from South London brags that he did most of this album in his bedroom with only a mike and his computer. "Seriously," he says, "I recorded half of that album in my underpants." The studio did a little "tweaking" here and there and, voila, one pop recording that seems destined to place high on the charts.

Backgrounder

A little backgrounder on Daniel Bedingfield: He was born in New Zealand and raised by social worker parents in South London. He used to be in a band, DNA Algorhythm, with his two younger sisters, and he used to work as a Web designer. He is also, it seems, a fervent Christian, and he "utterly and completely" dedicated his album to "the creator, Yahweh."

The album's title, "Gotta Get Thru This," is also the title of the smash-hit first single that launched Bedingfield's career. The album includes the original and an acoustic version, both of which make for some two-stepping grooving. The beat is infectious, and the over-all sound is widely appealing urban, with a touch of techno.

On the strength of this one song, Bedingfield was enthusiastically hailed as the next Craig David and the "king of UK garage." We say "was" because with the subsequent release of "James Dean "(I Wanna Know)" and "If You're Not the One," the eager clubbers who first championed this newcomer have now mournfully realized that their guy leans more towards boy band crooning than dance beats.

"James Dean (I Wanna Know)" sounds like something that Michael Jackson would have done back in the '80s , down to the Jacko-like rhythmic gasps. Definitely not garage, and definitely pop. It isn't unpleasant, but it isn't something we'd choose to listen to under other circumstances. And James Dean doesn't have anything to do with it, either.

BEDINGFIELD. Pop, but not cheesy.

Pining and sighing

"If You're Not the One" is your typical sappy ballad—and the song that dealt a fatal blow to Bedingfield's grittier street image. There's a great deal of pining and sighing in this one, but no more than usual. Some reluctant listeners also say that the lyrics, though fluffy, are not as silly as the ones in your typical boy band ballad.

The melody is memorable enough, and Bedingfield sings in a soft, husky way calculated to flutter as many susceptible hearts as possible, and they *are* fluttering it seems, judging by the extensive airplay the song has been enjoying.

Differing from "If You're Not the One" and other sappy tracks in this album are "Blown it Again," "Friday," and "Inflate My Ego."

"Blown it Again" is a beat-driven dance number and "Friday" is a catchy, reggae-ish tune whose lyrics are a tad on the inane side. The first lines, for example, go: "I live in a nice house-a/ I never do dance salsa/ I'm living in Jamaica/ I live in an ice-breaker/ I'm living in Africa/ I never do know where-a/ where I'm living/ But I'm living in a freefall."—Um, say that again?

Funk

"Inflate My ego" is another danceable little number with a broad streak of funk. It's based on the "Peter Gunn" theme and fun to listen (or move) to, not just because of its bouncy beat but for its self-mocking sentiments, as well.

This album is solid enough and it's certainly technically well-polished. And, at least, Bedingfield doesn't hide behind the skirts of other songwriters, unlike other pop stars. He's pop, but he's not cheesy—but then again, neither is he Michael Jackson, Sting, and Stevie Wonder rolled into one!

Positive values in puppet monster show

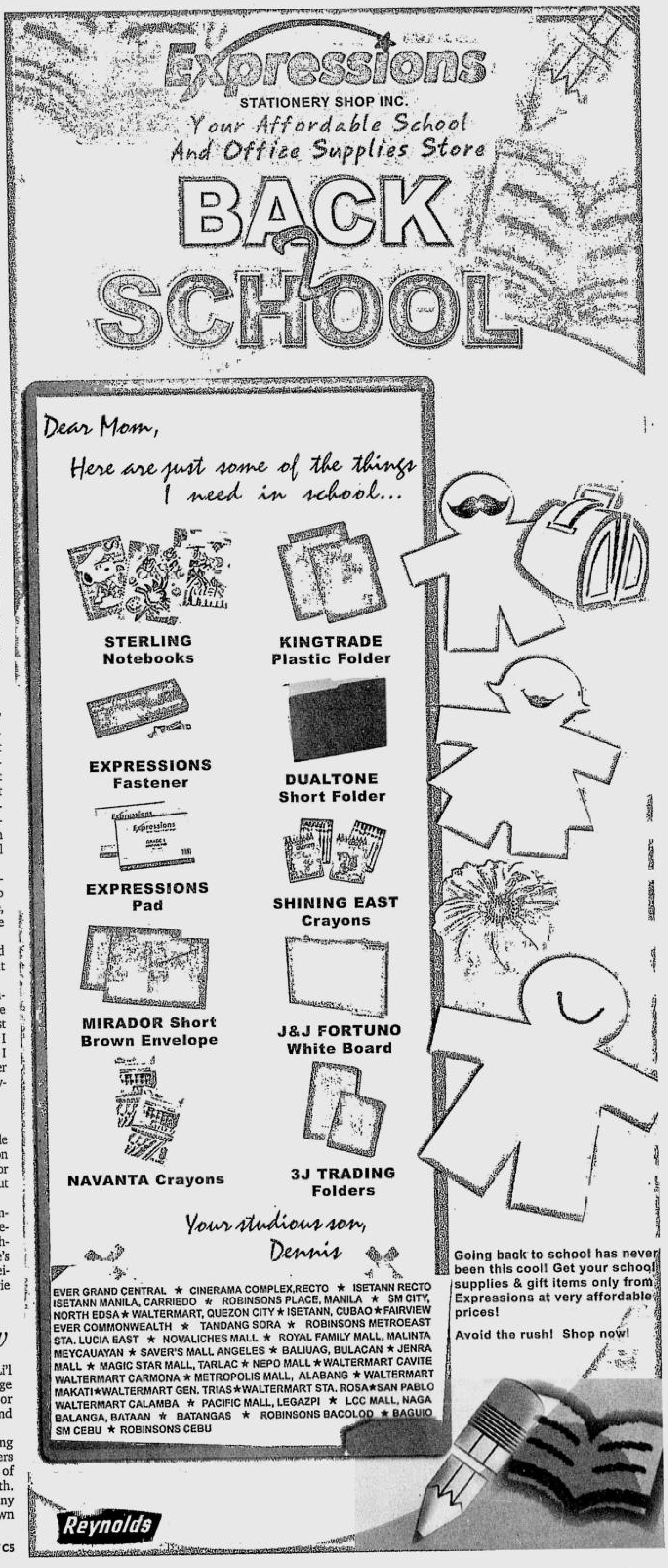
VALUES in a monster show? That seems odd for a puppet sitcom featuring a vampire boy, serpent-headed girl, a bandage-clad mummy, a zombie, a brain-screwed horror and a host of other spooky characters in a school for monsters.

Latest offering

But wait till you see Net 25's latest offering aired every Saturday from 6 to 6:30 p.m. "Lil Horrors" is a children's puppet sitcom specifically produced for the 5 to 8-year-old age group. Much programming is made for preschoolers, and for 9-year-olds and older. "Li'l Horrors" is created for the in-between age group. It does not talk down to its audience or aim over its head, but is infused with wit and off-the-wall humor.

Making friends, staying friends, losing friends, learning to live and play with others and to accommodate differences are some of the issues that "Li'l Horrors" deals with. Through its stories, predicaments and funny situations, a child will be taken on his own journey growing up in the world.

POSITIVE/ C5



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Reynolds

Kidman moves up in Australia's super-rich league

KIDMAN. Worth A$123 M (US $81 M). AFP

SYDNEY—Actress Nicole Kidman's Hollywood success has pushed her higher up the ranks of Australia's super rich, whose fortunes are soaring in defiance of tumbling stockmarkets, a magazine survey showed on Wednesday.

Kidman, who recently won an Oscar, is worth A$123 million ($81 million), making her Australia's 10th richest woman, according to Business Review Weekly's latest "Rich 200" list.

Glamorous redhead

The glamorous redhead, whose personal wealth grew an estimated 10 percent in the past year, is likely to move further up the list in 2004 after the award for her performance in "The Hours" as suicidal English writer Virginia Woolf.

"Winning an Academy Award will certainly improve her earning capacity," the magazine said.

Media and gaming magnate Kerry Packer remained Australia's richest man by far. His fortune was valued in April at A$5.5 billion ($3.6 billion), down from A$5.9 billion a year ago.

Midas touch

BRW said Packer's so-called Midas touch was tarnished by the falling share price of his family-controlled Publishing & Broadcasting Ltd., the impact of drought on his agricultural land-holdings and a sour property deal in Perth.

Packer and 68 others on the "Rich 200" list saw their wealth fall in the year, while 98 increased their riches. The rest either marked time or were new entrants. Reuters

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Sexy Asian angels display amazing martial arts techniques in 'So Close'

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Gutsy and brilliant female cop Yat Hong (Karen Mok) relentlessly pursue the sisters, who are in turn fascinated by their tough adversary.

SO CLOSE, starring Asia's most alluring and talented young actresses, features the coolest, breath-taking martial arts sequences from world-renowned director Cory Yuen, Jet Li's martial arts choreographer in THE ONE, KISS OF THE DRAGON and ROMEO MUST DIE. Don't miss it!

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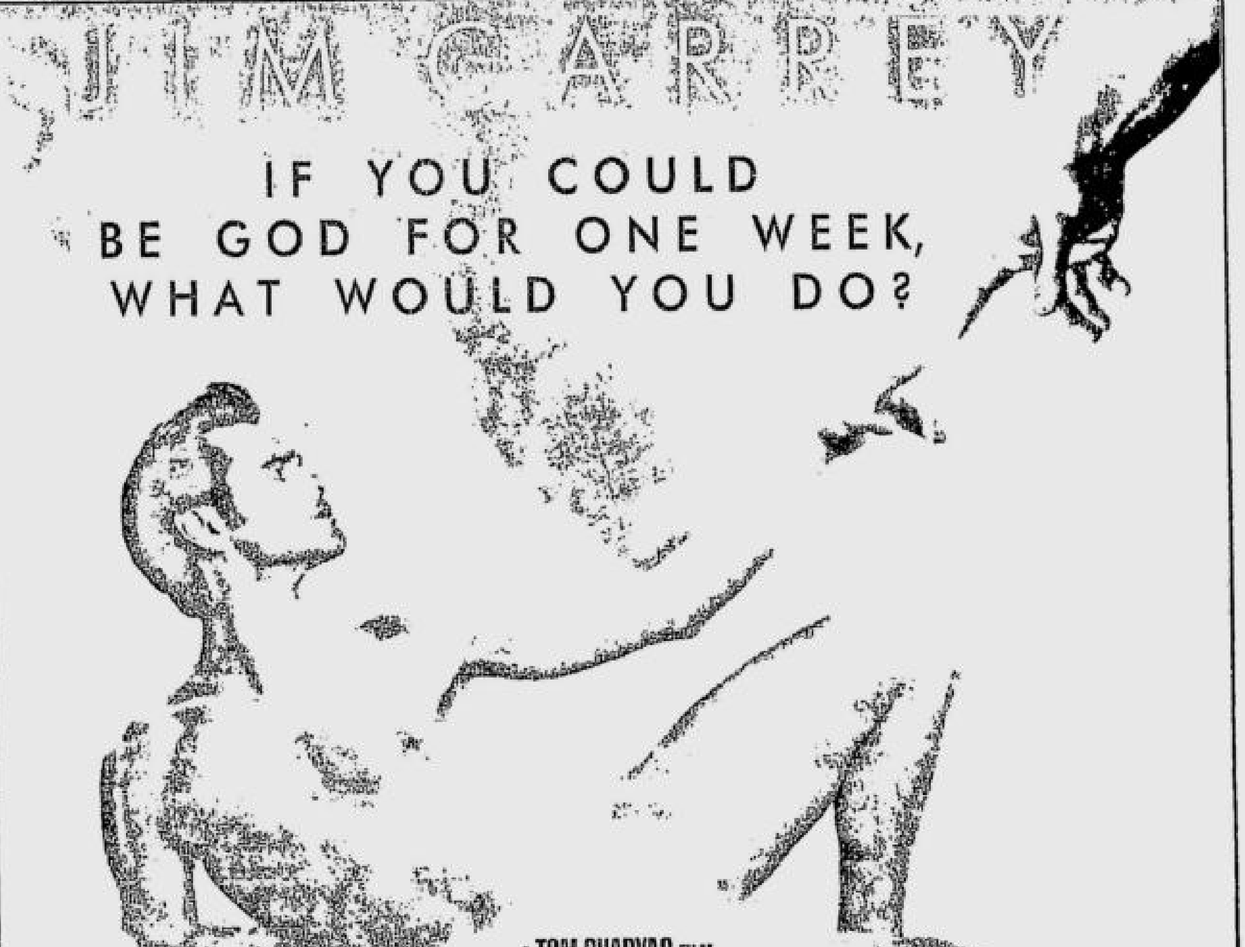

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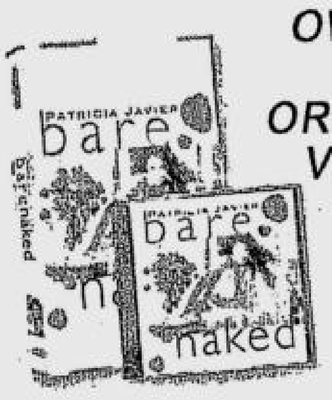

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Britain's Greenaway 're-invents' cinema at Cannes

CANNES, France—For most filmmakers, presenting a movie at Cannes is a dream realized. But not for Peter Greenaway. The British director presented a movie that he plans to be only the start of a massive project that encompasses two sequels, television, DVD, the Internet and publishing.

Ambitious project

"The Tulse Luper Suitcases, Part 1, The Moab Story" is "a very big and very ambitious project," Greenaway told a news conference before the festival closed.

"Re-inventing contemporary cinema," was what it was all about, said the 61-year-old, a leading light of contemporary filmmaking over the past two decades, who said most movies nowadays were about as relevant to our times as 19th-century novels.

Discovery

His three Tulse Luper feature-length films cover 60 years of the 20th century, what Greenaway describes as "the Uranium years," from its discovery in 1928 in Colorado to the collapse of the Berlin Wall and the end of the Cold War in 1989.

GREENAWAY. His three Tulse Luper feature films cover 60 years of the 20th century.

AFP

Tulse Luper himself is a writer and project-maker who is jailed 16 times in the trilogy, which begins in Wales, shifts to Utah's Moab desert and the Mormons, then goes on to Antwerp where Luper is arrested by Belgian fascists.

Fundamental link

The film, underlining the fundamental link between jailer and prisoner, runs in and out of history, art and literature using a visual patchwork of video-like technqiues with images within images, flashbacks and multiple screens.

Greenaway, who has left Britain to live in The Netherlands where he has solid backing, said that when he began working in film there "used to be a very pluralist cinema but that pluralism has disappeared."

Filmmaking, he said, had failed to keep pace with new technologies such as the Internet, television and video. While his generation grew up with films, 15 to 35-year-olds grew up with computers.

New audiences

"Most cinema is illustrating the 19th century novel, but now there are new audiences familiar with new images," he said. "Any self-respecting film-maker should acknowledge these audiences." "Sequential storytelling in a modern world is too slow and too simple," he said.

Cinema was about getting under the viewer's skin, he said.

"Cinema has to fascinate, excite, give intellectual, emotional and retinal pleasure. It is a filmmaker's brief and I take it seriously." Along with the three films, the project notably includes the making of a TV series of 16 40-minutes shows, a three-year website, books, 1001 love letters and 92 DVDs about the 92 suitcases in the film.

The Tulse Luper film is Greenaway's fourth nomination for Cannes' top prize, the Palme d'Or. Earlier successes include critically-acclaimed "The Draughtsman's Contract," "The Cook, the Thief, His Wife et Her Lover" and "Prospero's Books." *AFP*

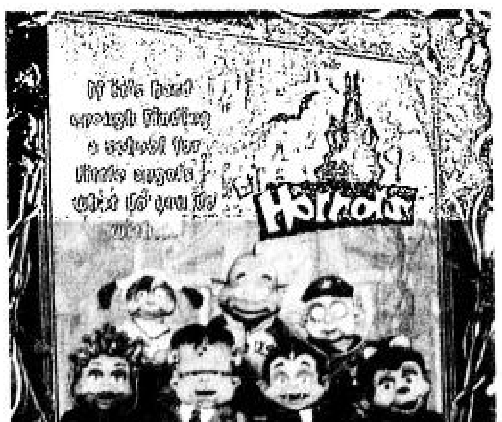
Positive . . .

From page C3

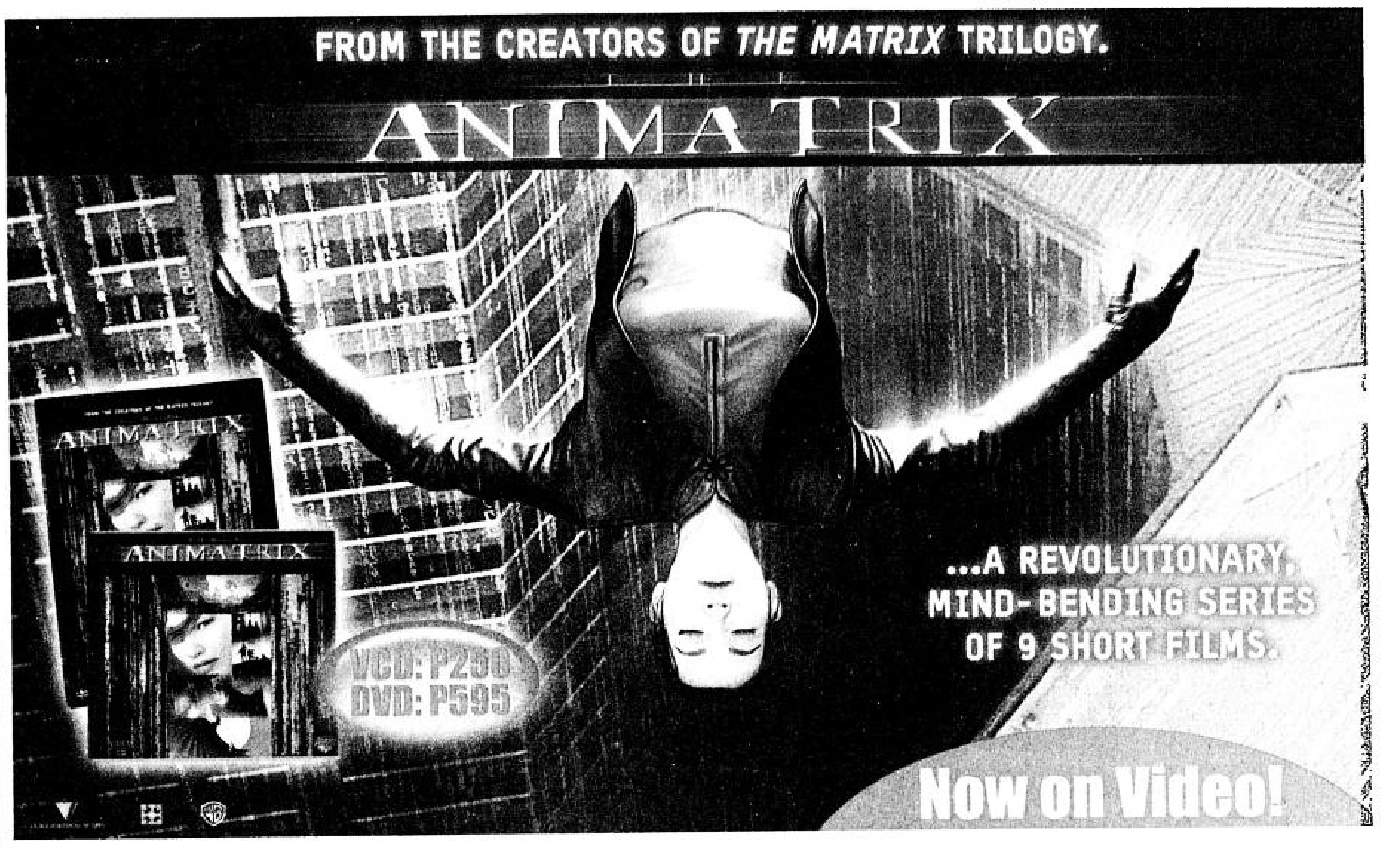
Different

The Li'l Horrors are physically very different from each other. Young viewers will identify with Vlad, Medusilla, Duncan, Claudia, Webster, Cleo and maybe even Abercrombie.

The stories in "Li'l Horrors" reflect the experiences and emotions of children, albeit in a fantasy setting. Adults do not step in to solve problems, and the child characters are shown to be responsible for their actions and their consequences.



IN "Li'l Horrors," children are responsible for their actions and their consequences.



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Chaplin's 'Modern Times' still relevant, his daughters say

CANNES, France—Charlie Chaplin's "Modern Times," about to hit world screens in a new restored version, is as relevant today as on its first release in 1936, his family said Friday.

About unemployment

"It's a film about unemployment," daughter Josephine said in an interview with AFP. "Look at what's happening today, the protests, the strikes . . . It's very relevant and always will be."

One of the eight children Chaplin had with Oona O'Neill, daughter of playwright Eugene O'Neill, she heads the Chaplin Association involved in a groundbreaking project with French firm MK2 to restore 10 Chaplin classics and re-release them in world cinemas.

"Apart from the cars, all of his films are contemporary," said actress daughter Geraldine, in Cannes with brother Michael and sister Annie for the gala premiere of a restored version of "Modern Times," the hilariously funny and biting social satire that closed the festival ahead of its world release next month.

Funny walk

In fact Chaplin as the tiny, moustachioed "Tramp" with the funny walk and the big feet belonged as much to legend as to the family, his children said.

"If only he could have done a film on (US President George W.) Bush and (former Iraqi leader) Saddam Hussein," said Geraldine.

"Modern Times," Chaplin's last "silent" movie made when others were doing "talking" movies, features himself as a factory worker who meets Paulette Godard, making her debut as a hungry barefoot streetgirl of the post-Depression years.

The film is being screened using a digital projector, a fledgling technology drawing images from computer memory instead of old-style spools of celluloid.

MK2 describes the quality as "almost equal" to the copy made for the world premiere in New York in 1936. In all, 126,000 images were scanned and retouched one by one by the LTC-Scanlab laboratory. *AFP*

CHAPLIN'S FAMILY AT CANNES. From left, Michael, Carmen, Geraldine, George, Annie and Dolores.

AFP

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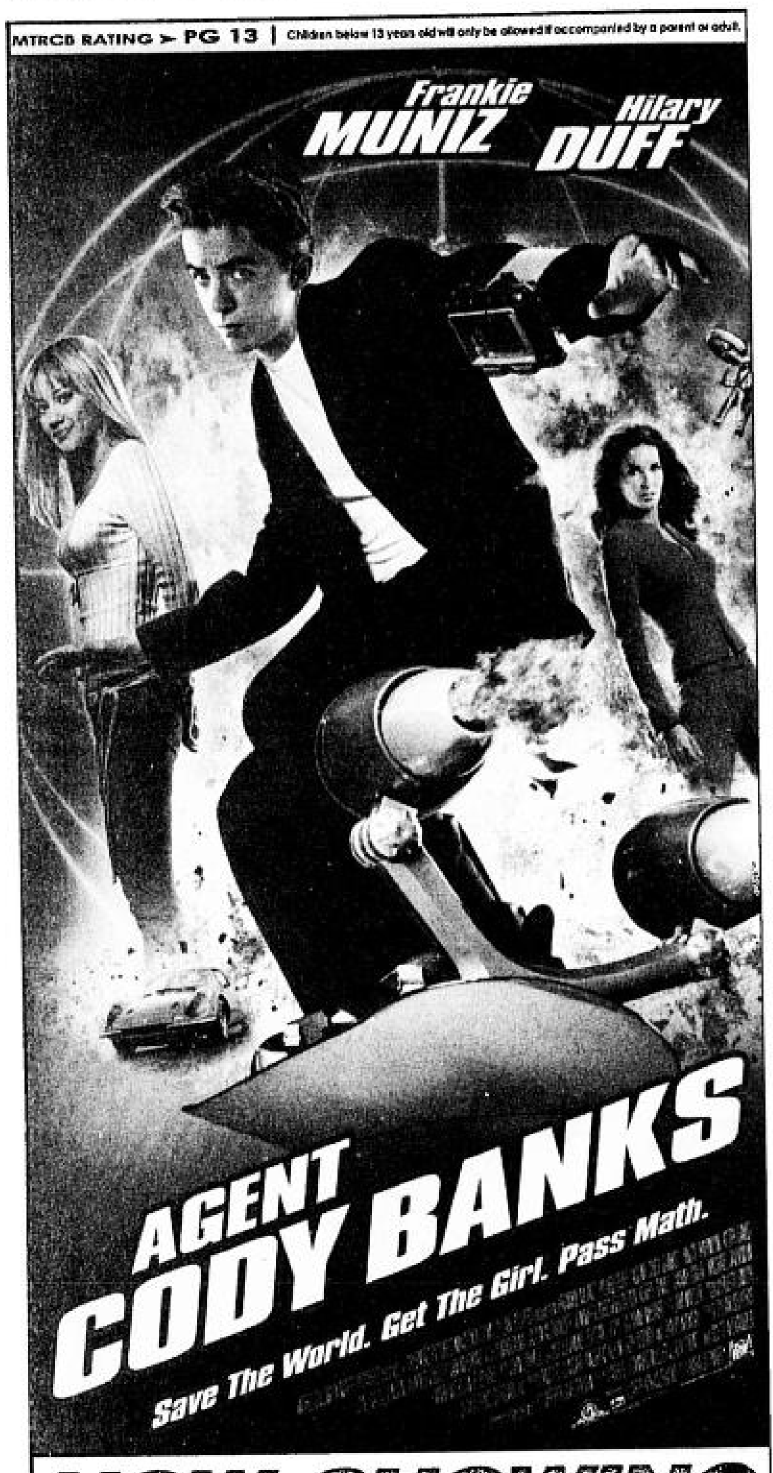

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Ali 5	AGENT CODY BANKS
Ali 6	FRIDA
Ali 7	KAPITBAHAY

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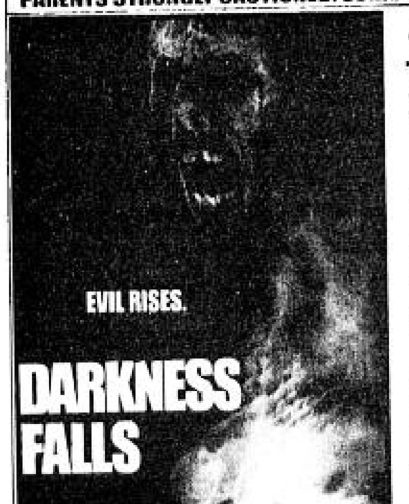

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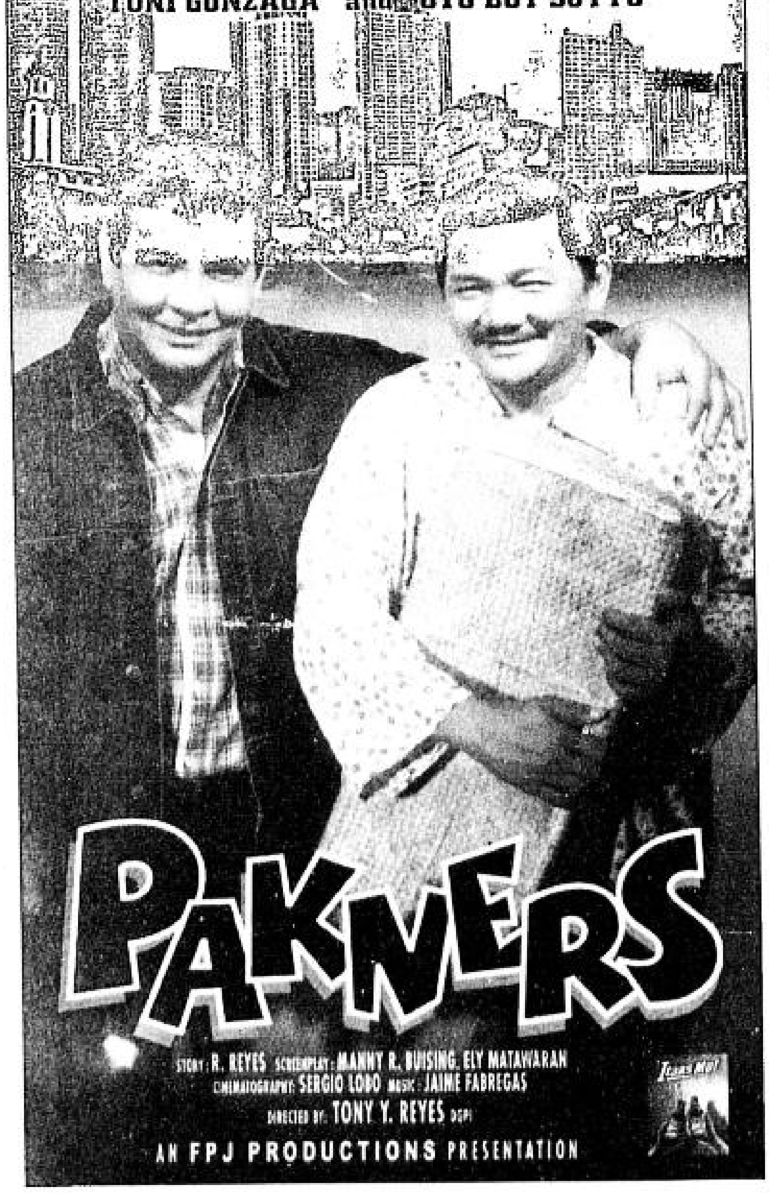
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ROBEN	BOLD STAR
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TIMES	SPY / LEGEND OF CROCODILE

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ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	ORIGINAL SIN
ACT-4	HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY
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CINEMA-5 (DTS)	X-MEN 2
CINEMA-6	KIKAY
CINEMA-7	TILL THERE WAS YOU
CINEMA-8	MATRIX RELOADED
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	MATRIX RELOADED
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	MATRIX RELOADED
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	SO CLOSE
CINEMA-12	HOW TO LOSE A GUY
CINEMA-14	RING 0
CINEMA-15	WALANG KAPALIT

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CINEMA-3	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT

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(PARANAQUE)	SENSUAL ISLAND
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CINEMA-2	MEN IN BLACK II
CINEMA-4	SELDA

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Name screenwriters bat for scripting reforms

By Nestor U. Torre

LEE. Sees the need to address long-festering problems.

WHEN we do columns and articles about the local entertainment scene, we don't expect the people we write about to react. When they do, however, we are gratified at the persuasiveness and influence of the written word.

30-year output

Recently, we were particularly heartened when ace screenwriter Ricky Lee called to thank us for our piece on his winning the 2003 Natatanging Urian award for his 30-year output of movie scripts.

Even better, Ricky said that he was challenged by the part in the article that discussed the many areas of reform in the field of screenwriting in the Philippines that veteran and acclaimed writers of his caliber could unite to finally address and mitigate.

Support

Ricky said he was talking to other name writers to do exactly that, and we in turn expressed our support for his efforts in this regard, because good writers have such a hard time doing their best work in the local film industry that many of them drop out after a few frustrating years, and are never heard from again.

This is a big waste of talent that could otherwise help improve the industry's output in the very important area of movie scripting. Thus, we wish Ricky and his equally concerned colleagues success in their effort to make the scripting scene more conducive to good work for younger screenwriters.

Areas

What are the areas that need to be reformed? They include:

The general lack of respect for scripts. Producers pay good money for screenplays, but they are sometimes whimsically altered or otherwise shabbily mistreated during the entire production process. As a result, scripts lose their integrity and this becomes one of the reasons why many local films don't work.

Producers invariably pledge to give new writers the breaks they deserve to be able to start working in the mainstream movie industry, but very few are actually as supportive as they promise to be. As a result, new writers are often underpaid, are unable to protect their scripts from deleterious alterations, and fall prey to the cliques and power brokers who reserve actual scripting work in the industry to a favored few.

Range and depth

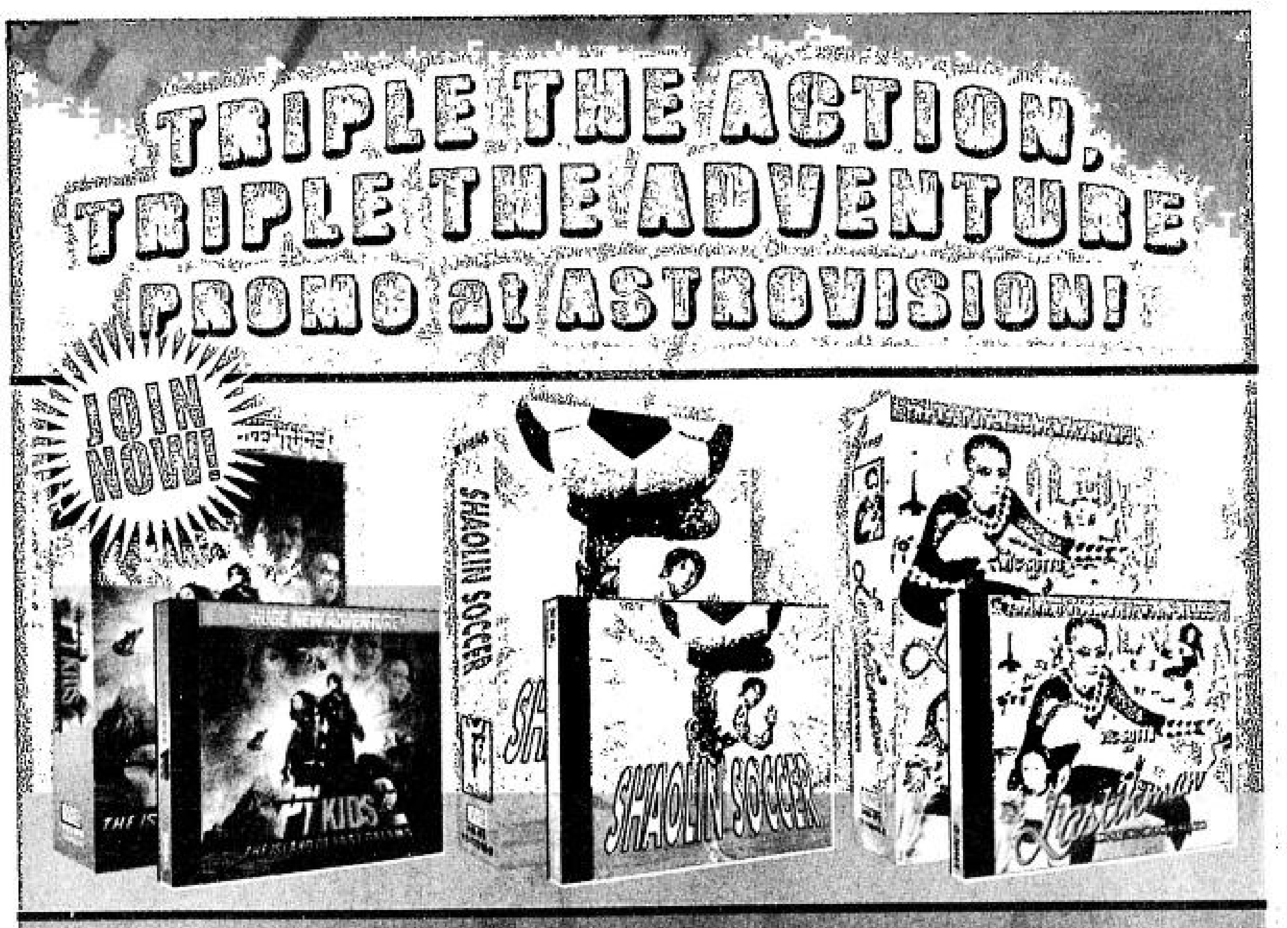
Film projects are star rather than story or theme-oriented, thus limiting the range and depth of local screenplays. Producers and directors should be encouraged to opt for fresh scripting approaches rather than big star value to enrich our movie products, especially at this time, when expensive star combinations no longer assure box-office success.

Long before there was film piracy, there was plagiarism of stories and scripts for the cinema, and the nefarious practice continues unabated, to the frustration of new writers whose original concepts sometimes end up being attributed to other people. This is one major reason why young writers eventually give up and opt to work in a less congenitally larcenous field.

More equitable

Writers' fees need to be raised. If screenwriters get at least half of what directors are paid, things would be more equitable all around, and scriptwriters would be encouraged to do their best work.

If some of these pressing problems can be addressed, the country's screenwriters will be very grateful—and the industry's scripting output would definitely improve.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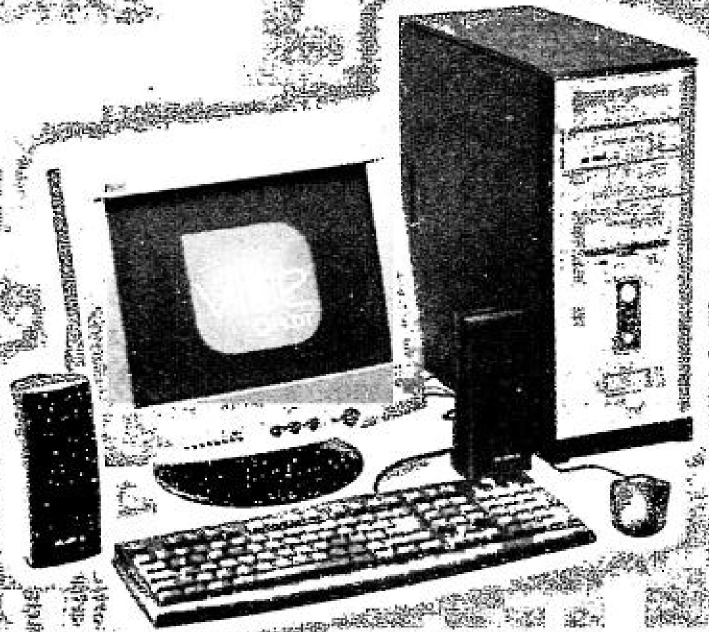

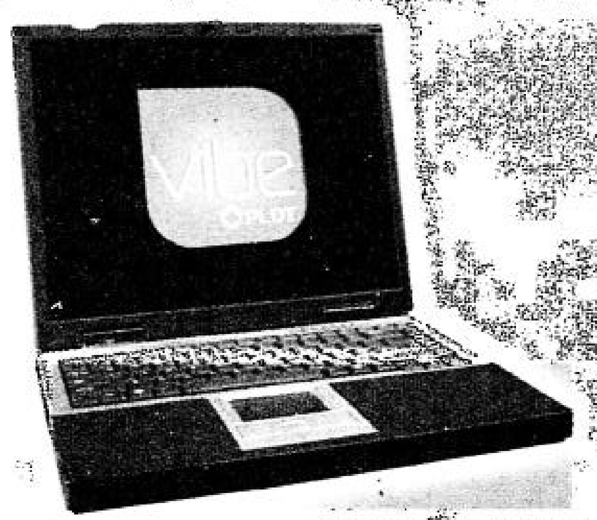

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Carrey is 'Almighty' at box office

By Dean Goodman

LOS ANGELES—With a little divine help, comedian Jim Carrey propelled the lucrative summer box office season to a record-breaking start over the US Memorial Day holiday weekend.

Omnipotence

Carrey's new film "Bruce Almighty," in which the 40-year-old Canadian plays a disenchanted newsman entrusted with omnipotence by God himself, sold a better-than-expected $86 million worth of tickets in its first four days.

The film ended the one-week reign of the sci-fi thriller "The Matrix Reloaded," which slipped to No. 2 with $45.6 million as its 12-day total raced to $209.5 million. It becomes the second-fastest film to reach the double-century mark (11 days versus nine for 2002's "Spider-Man").

The "Bruce Almighty" haul ranks as the second-best Memorial Day opening ever, behind only "The Lost World: Jurassic Park," which launched with $90.2 million in 1997.

CARREY. His new film sold a better-than-expected $86M worth of tickets in its first four days. AP

Star power

Carrey's star power aside, the grim weather also played a part, forcing Americans to ditch their traditional holiday barbecues for popcorn at the local multiplex.

"Bruce Almighty" also set new benchmarks for Carrey himself and for a non-sequel comedy. Its three-day sum of $70.8 million surpassed the 2000 Carrey hit "Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas," which held both those records with a $55.1 million opening.

Budgeted at $81 million, "Bruce Almighty" was released by Vivendi Universal SA's Universal Pictures, which partnered on the project with closely held producer Spyglass Entertainment. It was directed by Tom Shádyac, who previously worked with Carrey on the hit comedies "Ace Ventura: Pet Detective" and "Liar Liar." Morgan Freeman co-stars as God, and Jennifer Aniston as Carrey's girlfriend.

Very moral

Universal Pictures distribution president Nikki Rocco said she had expected the film to open in the $50 million to $60 million range. "I think it's a very moral film," she said.

While Carrey was obviously the key attraction, Aniston's presence and the romantic elements possibly accounted for the larger-than-usual female turnout.

Rounding out the top five were the Eddie Murphy comedy "Daddy Day Care" at No. 3 with $18 million; the superhero action movie "X2: X-Men United" at No. 4 with $13.1 million; and the new Michael Douglas comedy remake "The In-Laws" at No. 5 with a disappointing $9.1 million. *Reuters*

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Fantasy takes different forms in current films

By Nestor U. Torre

"CHARLIE'S ANGELS." Lucy Liu, Cameron Diaz and Drew Barrymore kick butt once again.

ADVENTURE and fantasy films are hitting it big with moviegoers this year, as proven by the outstanding showing of films like "X-Men 2," "The Matrix Reloaded," and just this week, "Bruce Almighty," which has topped the box office in the States.

Premise

As these films show, the fantasy film format is taking different shapes this movie season. The first two films are fantasy-science fiction, while "Bruce Almighty" is set in the here and now, but flies high with its fantasy premise: Jim Carrey as God (for a limited time only, thank goodness).

The film asks some philosophical questions, and answers them in many different bemusing ways. It's Theology with a comic twist, which explains its huge popularity with viewers, who love having a hearty laugh and feeling good about the world and themselves at the same time!

Adventure mode

Fantasy goes back to adventure mode in "Charlie's Angels: Full Throttle," with Drew Barrymore, Lucy Liu and Cameron Diaz reprising their "super-heroine" roles in the first "Charlie's Angels" movie.

This time around, the kick-butt trio goes undercover to retrieve two missing silver bands. These are no ordinary wedding rings—they contain valuable encrypted information that reveals the new identities of every person in the US's Federal Protection Program. When witnesses start turning up dead, the Angels have to stop the perpetrator.

Also in "Full Throttle" are Bernie Mac as the brand-new Bosley, Demi Moore as a "fallen" Angel, and original TV Angel Jaclyn Smith in a cameo appearance as Kelly Garrett. Major male characters in the movie are played by Matt LeBlanc, Luke Wilson and Crispin Glover.

Different

Meanwhile, Ang Lee is about to unveil his fantasy-action-horror screen version of "The Hulk," a different kind of film because it depicts its title character both as superhero and monster.

Lee and his team have stayed true to the subversive spirit of the original character created by Stan Lee and Jack Kirby, while completely updating him and projecting into him some of the dangers and aspirations of today's times.

Eric Bana stars as scientist Bruce Banner, whose inner demons transform him into The Hulk after a catastrophic experiment. Jennifer Connelly and Nick Nolte also star.

More playful

Finally, fantasy takes a more playful turn in the teen comedy, "Agent Cody Banks," where "ordinary" teenager Cody (Frankie Muniz) finds himself transformed into a junior version of super-sleuth James Bond.

It's every teen male's fantasy, so the movie doesn't scrimp on the escapist thrills and wish-fulfillment perks. Of course, Cody eventually realizes that the fantasy can't last forever and he has to confront his own issues as a vulnerable teen—but the screen romp is a fun trip while it lasts!

"AGENT CODY BANKS." Hilary Duff and Frankie Muniz take a break from all the high-tech action.

"THE HULK." Depicts its title character both as superhero and monster.

TRIVIAL PURSUITS

What goes around comes around for George Clooney

By Rito P. Asilo

ASK us anything about the entertainment world, and we'll do our darndest to get the right answer for you. Anything under the show biz sun! —like this week's confounding queries:

Casting merry-go-round

"What role did Sarah Michelle Gellar audition for in 'Buffy, The Vampire Slayer'? Who played Buffy in the original film version of the popular TV series?"—*Ronalyn de Lim, Valenzuela, Metro Manila.*

Gellar auditioned for the role of Cordelia Chase, played by Charisma Carpenter, who auditioned for the role of Buffy. On the other hand, James Marsters (Spike) auditioned for Angel (David Boreanaz).

The TV series debuted on the small screen in 1997 but the slayer's story was first adapted for the big screen in 1992, starring Kristy Swanson (as Buffy) and Luke Perry (as Oliver Pike).

But the movie was a disappointment at the box-office, earing a measly $17,000. Seth Green (Oz) was the only actor in the movie to appear in the TV spin-off, but his scenes were left on the cutting room floor.

From love interest to mother dearest

"Annette O'Toole, who plays Martha Kent (Clark Kent's loving adoptive mother) in the popular young Superman saga, 'Smallville,' played an important character in 'Superman 3,' starring Christopher Reeve as the Man of Steel. Who did she play in the movie?"—*Christina Perez, Makati.*

Annette O'Toole played Lana Lang, Clark's teen-age flame, in "Superman 3."

O'TOOLE. Played Lana Lang in "Superman 3."

Charmed by witches

"In which movie soundtrack can we find Love Spit Love's 'How Soon is Now,' the title song from '"Charmed?"'

The catchy tune from "Charmed" was in the soundtrack recording of "The Craft" (1996), also about young witches, that starred Neve Campbell ("Party of Five;" "Scream").

But the song was just a cover from the '80s band, The Smiths.

CLOONEY. His first TV series co-starred him with Elliot Gould.

Lovable orphan grows up

"Which character from a popular musical did 'Sex and the City's' Sarah Jessica Parker portray on Broadway? What kind of animal in another production did she play?"

Long before Sarah Jessica Parker rose to fame as a sex columnist on HBO's "Sex and the City," she played the title role in the original run of the popular musical, "Annie," for two years. She was third in the list of girls to play her.

But she debuted on Broadway in the musical, "The Innocents," followed by a stint as one of the Von Trapp kids (along with four of her siblings) in "The Sound of Music." After a number of critically acclaimed stage productions and films, she played the lead in another Broadway play, "Sylvia"—as a dog!

One actor's loss is another actor's gain

"Which actor was originally offered the part of Chandler Bing, the character that made Matthew Perry a household name? What were the original working titles of 'Friends?'"

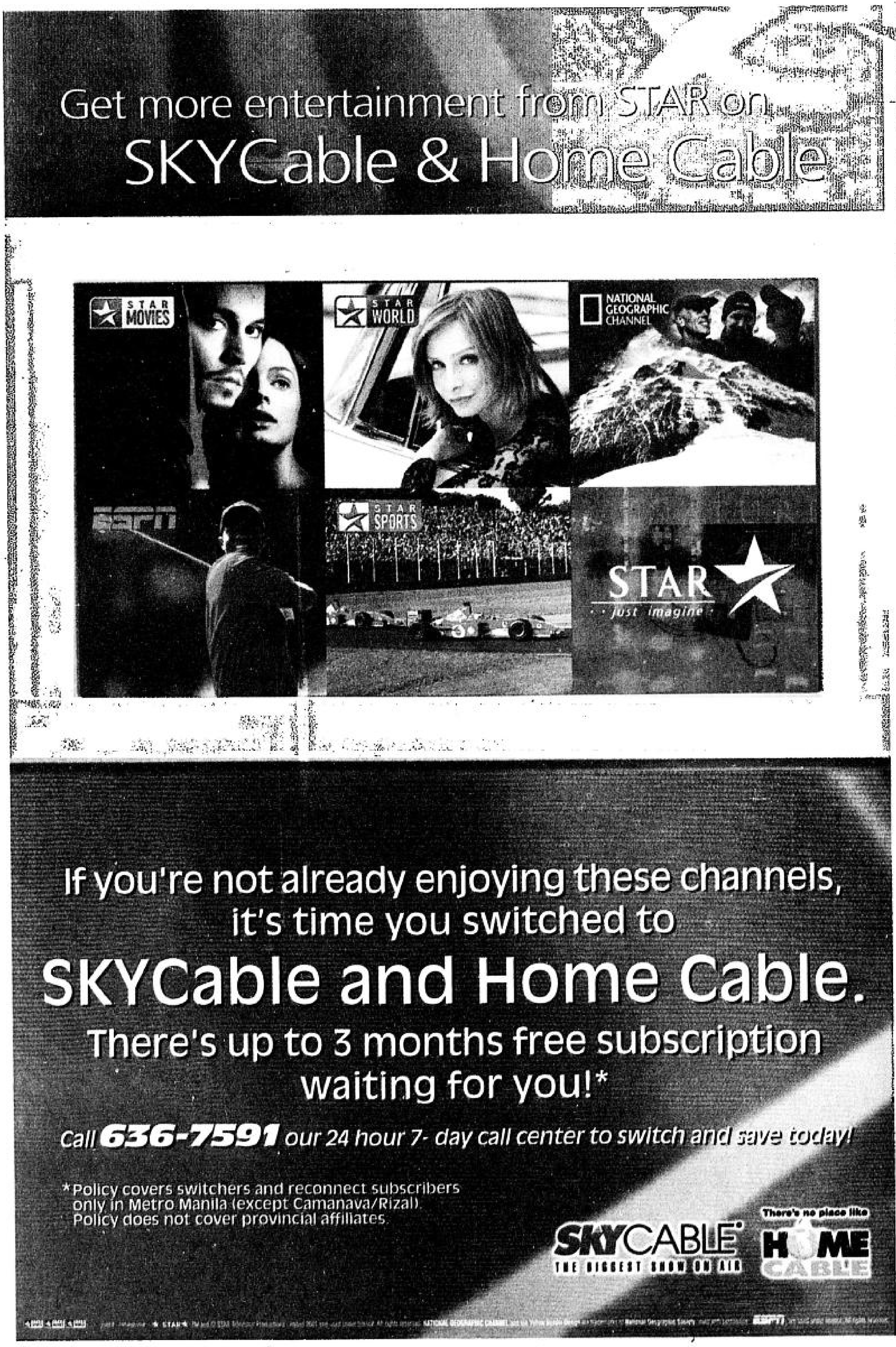
Jon Cryer, the actor who hung out with the Brat Pack in "Pretty in Pink," was the first choice for the role but negotiations with the actor fell through.

During the taping of the pilot episode of "Friends" in 1994, its creators chose among "Across the Hall;" "Friends Like Us" and "Six in One." Good thing they decided that, indeed, less is more!

First regular TV show

"What was George Clooney's first regular TV show before he hit the jackpot with Michael Crichton's medical drama, 'E.R.?'"

Ten years before George Clooney was cast as Dr. Ross on "E.R." (1994) he appeared on his first TV series, a comedy, starring Barbra Streisand's former husband, Elliot Gould, and Jason Alexander. The show was titled—"E/R"!



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Why young people like viewing 'Meteor Garden'

By Noelani Torre

YOU see them everywhere nowadays—on television and the internet, laid out on sidewalks, and on peoples' bedroom walls. The stars of the recently launched Taiwanese soap "Meteor Garden" have ousted local and Hollywood celebs from the hearts and minds of young Filipinos—for now, at least.

The names on everyone's lips are no longer Jericho and Kristine, but Dao Ming Si and Shan Chai—the two lead characters in "Meteor Garden." Curious about the surprising impact the show has been making on local viewers, we asked several self-admitted fans to tell us what it is exactly they find appealing about "Meteor Garden." Their answers:

Taiwanese

"I first watched 'Meteor Garden' to find out what it was about. Since the cast was Taiwanese, I thought there would be some martial arts stuff. Then it turns out that the leads are the members of F4! An Asian boy band!

"The characters are funny—they have strange personalities. Some scenes really break me up! Shan Chai and Dao Ming Si's love story is also weird.

"However, it's not that different from our local TV soaps. A rich guy falls for a poor girl, love triangles, the usual *kontrabidas, away-away, iyakan, kilig* moments, etc. But since it's the first Asian soap on TV, the acceptance is warm."—***Milagros Polina, Surigao del Sur.***

Perfect show

"I love watching 'Meteor Garden' because it's the perfect show young people like me. We find it different from the usual Tagalog soap operas.

"It's also kinda addictive, not like local TV shows. And it drives me crazy! It's new and different at the same time."—***Luke Lasam, Quezon City.***

Fashions

"*Gusto ko ang* 'Meteor Garden' *kasi* oriental-beauty *ang* lifestyle. I also like the show because of Shan Chai—*and ganda niya! OK din ang* F4, *lalo na sina* Dao *at* Lei. *Gusto ko ang* fashions *nila. Ginagaya ko nga ang* hairstyle *nila.*

"*Maganda rin ang* music *ng* 'Meteor Garden,' *pati yung* melody *sa mga* sentimental *o mga 'pagmumuni-muni' na* parts *ng palabas.*

"Predictable *din ang kuwento ng* 'Meteor Garden,' *lalo na para sa ating mga Pilipino—mahirap si* Shan Chai, *kaya puwede mong isipin na kagaya ng nangyayari sa* soaps *natin, may pag-asa siyang yumaman. Marami tayong* similarities *kay* Shan Chai—*matapang, pasugod, may pag-asa.*

"*Kung minsan mabagal ang takbo ng kuwento dahil pinapahalagahan masyado ang mga* sentimental *o* thoughtful parts *ni* Shan Chai, *pero* OK *lang kasi* exciting *ang bawat pangyayari.*"—***Ert Altas, Iloilo City.***

Break

"*Nakakatawa ang* 'Meteor Garden.' It's a break from all those Latino telenovelas—finally, something Asian! It's aimed at teenyboppers, *pero* comedy *kasi kaya madali maka*-attract *ng ibang klaseng* audience. *May* western *pa rin na* slant—F4 is a boy band. It has typical situations about boyfriend-girlfriend relationships *na laganap na rin dito.*

"The plot is simple, unlike our complicated telenovelas (*patay na nga, tapos buhay pa pala*—either *nagtago o nagpalit ng mukha*, etc). Cute *ang mga* characters—*at ayos ang* hairstyles!"—***Music majors from UP Diliman (Rose, Ross, Adora, Waldo, Jose).***

Unique

"I like 'Meteor Garden' because it's not like other *teleseryes* where people keep crying all the time. *Dito, palaban ang mga bida.* Also, the story is unique, not like the much too common situations of the local soap *bida* who usually starts out poor and eventually becomes rich in the end.

"'Meteor Garden' also elaborates on the lifestyle of college students like us, and shows the devotion friends have for each other."—***Dee-Dee Perez, Iligan City.***

F4 with leading lady Shan Chai (top, second from left)

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- Every purchase of 1 sack of *MGC* Rice from any grain wholesaler/retailer gets customer one (1) raffle coupon. Just simply fill up the coupon with your name, address, telephone number, and signature. Dealer's name and complete address must likewise be supplied.
- Drop the entries in drop boxes located at *MGC* rice dealers or mail to BIGAS PANALO, BIYAHE PAPREMYO c/o BC Concepts 2/F Don William Bldg., Javier cor. Santillan Sts, Makati City.
- All employees of RMJR Grains Center, its advertising agency its merchants dealers and the security and manpower agencies including relatives up to second degree of sanguinity or affinity are disqualified from joining this promo.

Minor Raffle Draw/s
- A total of two (2) winners and their dealers will win in each minor raffle draws.
- The minor raffle draws will be held under the supervision of a DTI rep. at RMJR Grains Promo Office, 2/F Don William Bldg. Javier cor Santillan Sts., Makati City on the following dates:

DRAW DATE	TIME
May 30, 2003	2:00PM to 3:00PM
July 25, 2003	2:00PM to 3:00PM
September 26, 2003	2:00PM to 3:00PM
November 28, 2003	2:00PM to 3:00PM

- Winners can only win once per draw. If a name is drawn more than once he/she gets the prize of higher value. However a person can win more than once during the whole duration of the promo.
- Non-winning entries per draw are not qualified to join the succeeding draws but will be qualified to join the grand raffle draw.

Grand Draw
- A total of one hundred twenty seven (127) winners and their dealers will win in the grand draw.
- The grand draw will be held under the supervision of a DTI rep. on December 20, 2003 at RMJR Grains Promo Office, 2/F Don WilliamBldg., Javier cor Santillan Sts., Makati City.
- The deadline for submission of entries for the grand draw will be at 7:00 PM of December 12, 2003.
- Winners can win only once on the grand draw. Names drawn more than once will automatically win the prize with the higher value.

Prizes
- For the minor raffle draws, the following vacation packages will be given away:

Minor Raffle Draw - May 30, 2003 One (1) Cebu & One (1) Puerto Galera	P5,000 for dealers
Minor Raffle Draw – July 25, 2003 One (1) Bohol & One (1) Banaue	P5,000 for dealers
Minor Raffle Draw – September 26, 2003 One (1) Boracay & One (1) Ilocos Norte	P5,000 for dealers
Minor Raffle Draw – November 28, 2003 One (1) Palawan & One (1) Davao	P5,000 for dealers

- For the grand draw, the following vacation packages will be given away:

Major Prizes

Grand Prize Winner Trip to Tokyo Disneyland w/ P500,000 Pocket Money OR P500,000 in Cash	Dealer P100,000 cash
1st Prize Winner Trip to Thailand w/ P50,000 Pocket Money OR P50,000 in Cash	Dealer P25,000 cash

Minor Prizes

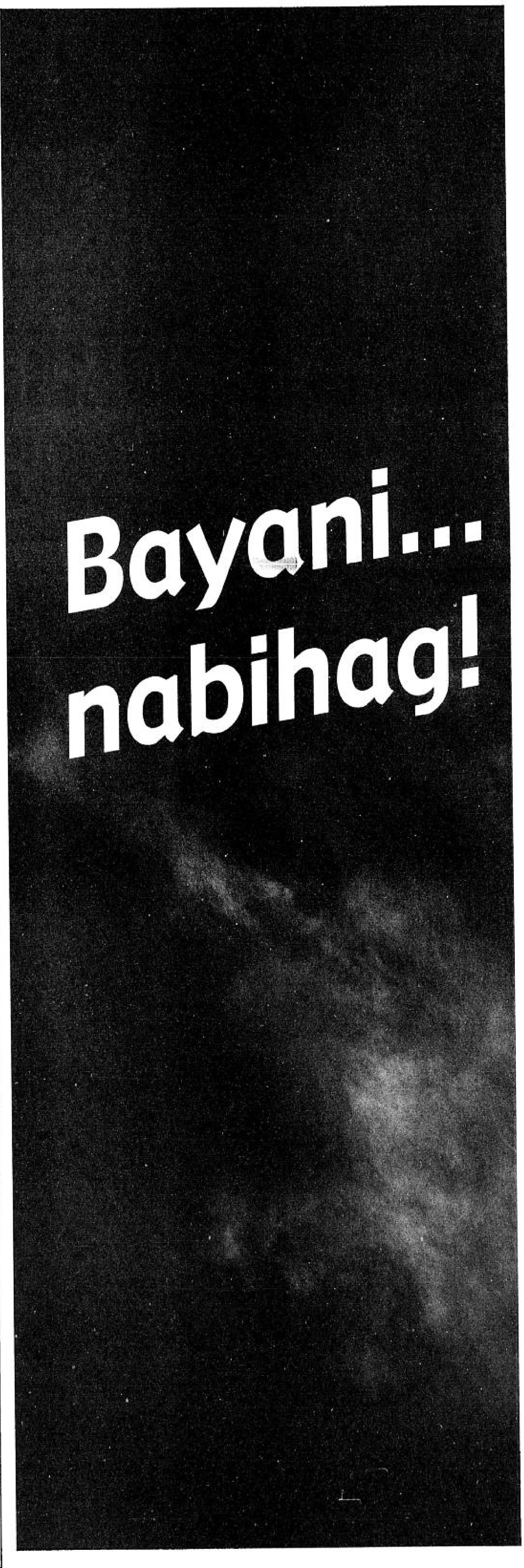
	Winner/Dealer	
Mandarin Travel Bag	25	25
Mandarin Luggage	25	25
BF 800 Cannon Camera	25	25
9QT Coleman Cooler	25	25
MGC Sports Jacket	25	25

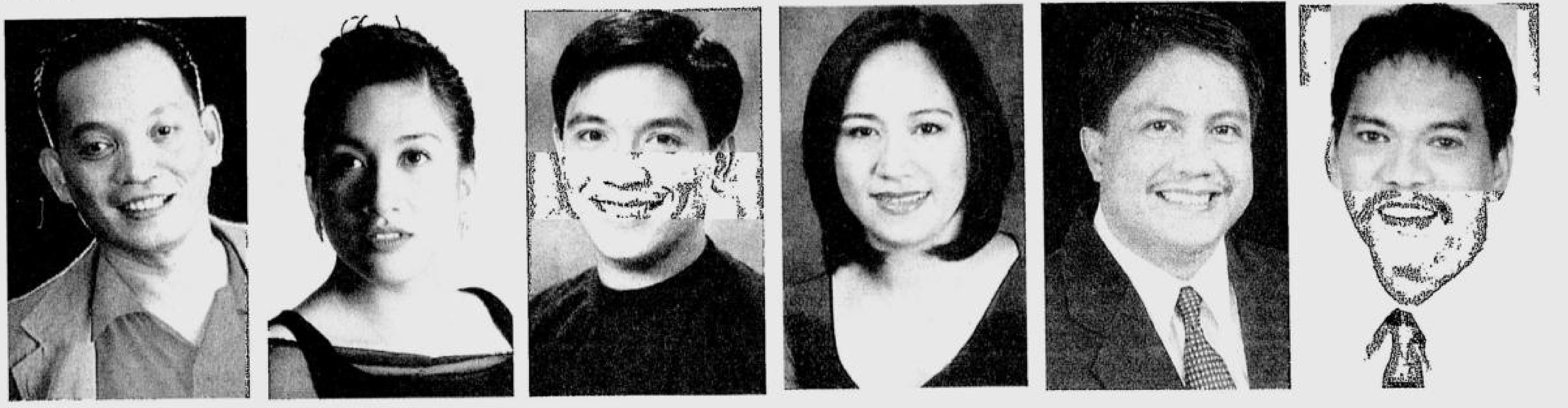
- All prizes are tax free.
- All trips are valid for use up to six (6) months from date of issue.
- Winners will shoulder and facilitate all documents necessary for international travel.
- All winners will shoulder travel tax and insurance as well as transportation/travel expenses incurred in the course of claiming their prizes.
- Major prizes in the grand raffle draw are convertible to cash but not transferable.
- All minor raffle prizes are transferable but not convertible to cash.
- All raffle prizes are non-replaceable with other items.

Claiming of Raffle Prizes
- All raffle draw winners may claim their prizes at RMJR Grains Promo Office, BC Concepts, Inc., 2/F Don William Bldg., Javier cor Santillan Sts. Makati City.
- Winners should bring two (2) valid ID's (passport, driver's license, SSS) letter of notice and raffle stub.
- Prizes that are unclaimed after 60 days from receipt of notification will be forfeited in favor of RMJR Grains Center with prior approval of DTI-NCR.
- The equivalent prize for the dealer of an entry drawn without its name and address will be likewise forfeited in favor of RMJR Grains Center.

See posters for complete details.

Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 1476, Series of 2003





BAIS, FELEO, ASILO, ASUNCION, VILLAFLOR AND VELOSO. Their hearts are in the right place.

Entertainers for H.O.P.E. to perform for caregivers and patients at Medical City

By Nestor U. Torre

OUR new public service project, Entertainers for H.O.P.E., gets going on June 14 with a fun-filled and spirit-boosting performance at Medical City, in celebration of the third anniversary of "We Care," a support group of caregivers for mentally-ill patients under the hospital's Department of Psychiatry.

This is only the first of what we hope will be many performances in hospitals, orphanages, offices, prisons, educational institutions, and just about any place that feels it can do with a burst of inspiring entertainment. If you belong to one such group, call Happy at 713-9323 or 0919-2065424.

Main reason

We call Entertainers for H.O.P.E a public service project because its main reason for being is to inspire through fun entertainment, not to make money.

Its performances of skits and songs feature some of the best musical-theater performers in the country—the very entertaining musical-comedy group Comedy Cola, made up of Andy Bais, Rito Asilo, Joel Villaflor, Sheila Asuncion and Ana Feleo. At the Medical City show, Manila Councilor and TV-theater-film artist Lou Veloso is the guest performer.

How did we "persuade" these sterling talents to perform literally for a song? We didn't have to! The minute we told them what Entertainers for H.O.P.E. wanted to do, they were ready willing and *eager* to perform.

One-hour show

For Medical City's patients and medical personnel, we've been asked to do a one-hour show. For other groups, depending on their needs, we can go from 30 minutes—to two hours! The important thing to us is that, at the end of a performance, we shall have given our audience a psychic boost. Lord knows, we all need it.

Like the idea? Want to help? Performers, both famous and unknown, can let Happy know they're interested. Non-performers who want to support E-H.O.P.E. may donate canned goods, medicines, clothes and other stuff that we can distribute when we visit orphanages, etc.

The key objective is for us to do our bit to change the prevailing mood here from pessimism to hope, so that more people will decide to take charge of their lives and prospects, rather than just sit in a conveniently dark corner, and watch the world shoot itself in both feet.

Convenient villains

It's so easy to blame our problems and woes on fate, incompetent leaders, the languishing economy, 9-11, SARS and other convenient villains, but where's the challenge in that? Let's get off our butts and butt heads—in the opposite, upbeat direction.

But, can songs and comedy really have a rinsingly, bracingly hopeful and inspiring effect on people who are down in the dumps? You'd better believe it! Laughter *is* the best medicine, and music is a tonic for the *sintunado* soul.

It's important, of course, that everyone who decides to help actualize E-H.O.P.E. do so with no vested interests. We have to share that we've gotten inquiries from singers who ask "What's in it for me?," balloon dealers who want to sell us their balloons, entertainers out for a free ride in terms of publicity, etc.

So sorry, people like that are part of the problem, and we want to be part of the solution.

Dustin Reyes values his Pinoy heritage

By Edmund L. Sicam

EVEN though he has lived a charmed life, Dustin Reyes, one of the newest talents from ABS-CBN's Star Circle, feels he should have no difficulty relating to the *masa* audience or making it in show business.

Junior year

Dustin was nine years old when his family moved to the United States. A few years ago, he decided to come back to the Philippines on his own, to take up Communication and Theater Arts at the Ateneo de Manila University. He's now in his junior year.

Dustin is really determined to give show biz a go, and he says he is ready for anything that will come his way. "Ever since I was young, *di ako gumagawa ng bagay na walang* meaning *sa buhay ko.* So whether I succeed or fail, it's an experience in itself. You learn things from this business that you can't learn in the Ateneo setting, or in the States. It makes you stronger."

He says that this experience has also helped him see who his real friends are. "Most Ateneans are not for *artistas*. They say, '*Ang* corny *naman niyan,* it's *baduy,*' I've gotten that already. But I'm pretty lucky with my friends at Ateneo. At first they didn't get it, but then they realized that I'm really dedicated, so they support me."

The newcomer admits that he has lived a life far more comfortable than that of the average Filipino, but he says he knows the value of hard work. He had to earn his own money to buy things he wanted, like a new pair of rubber shoes. When he was in the US, he worked ever since he was 16 years old—at a grocery stacking beer and chips, in construction, etc.

Household chores

And like all children who grow up in America, he had his share of household chores. He finds it amusing that his *manang*, who takes care of him and his cousin here, will not let him wash dishes or even cook his own rice! In America, he was used to taking care of himself.

Dustin grew up in a neighborhood that was predominantly white, so he experienced discrimination because he is a Filipino. "I think that's what pushed me more. After school, I rehearsed with my singing group, or for a play. I also did track and field, gymnastics."

Surgeon

Dustin's father is a surgeon and his mother is a registered nurse. So naturally, it was ingrained in his head that he would work in the medical profession when he grew up. But then he got involved in theater, he became part of his high school choir, and this created the spark that changed the course of his life. Dustin proudly says that he is a trained baritone, like Josh Groban.

If he really wanted to have a career in theater, why do it here in the Philippines? The young actor explains that it was his Filipino side calling him to come back.

"It sounds corny but you're in the States, you're watching CNN, it's just something, the Filipino side of you. I think of myself as different from the typical Fil-Am brought up there. *Kasi* my parents really wanted us (to be raised in the Filipino way). *Sa bahay, deretsong Tagalog kami.*

"I think more Filipinos trained in the States should come back to the Philippines and try to uplift show biz here."

REYES. Ready for anything that will come his way.

YOUR WEEKLY TV GUIDE FROM MAY 31 - JUNE 6

CH	2	4	5	[illegible]	9	13	23	29	[illegible]
[illegible]	6:30 Magandang Gabi, Bayan 8:00 Arriba, Arriba 8:30 Buttercup 9:00 Fiftyiesta Cinema 10:30 Kontrobersyal 11:30 "F" 12:00 Sports Unlimited	5:00 PBA Games 7:00 Yan Ang Pinoy 8:00 The Working President 9:00 14th Asian Games 2002 (Replay) 11:00 Business and Leisure	7:00 Sailormoon Sailor Stars 7:30 Mirror, Mirror 8:00 Wow Mali! 9:00 Viva Box Office *Love Notes* 11:00 Go For Gold	6:00 Dragon Ball Z 6:30 Imbestigador 7:30 Idol Ko Si Kap 8:30 Kakabakaba 9:30 Blockbuster Cinema 11:20 Flash Report 11:30 Master Showman	6:00 Isumbong Mo Kay Tulfo 7:00 7 Days 8:00 John Doe 9:00 Saturday Night Playhouse	5:00 PBA Provincial Game 8:00 Amazing Twins 9:00 To Be Announced 10:00 Bakbakan sa Maynila	6:00 Combat Mission 7:00 Game Plan 7:30 7th Heaven 8:30 Boston Public 9:30 Studio 23 Presents 11:30 Reel Deal	7:00 Xclusive Cinema Special 9:00 Oras Ng Katotohanan 9:30 Armor of God 10:00 Oh Tokyo 11:00 Pinoy Wrestling	5:30 CBS Evening News 6:00 E! News Weekend 7:00 Celebrity Profile 8:00 E! True Hollywood Story 10:00 David Letterman 11:00 Wild On
[illegible]	5:30 Sharon 7:00 Wansapanataym 8:30 Home Along Da Riles 9:30 Sunday Family Cinema 11:30 Dong Puno Tonight 12:00 The Weekend News	4:00 PBA Games 9:00 14th Asian Games (Replay) 10:00 Standing Room Only	6:00 Zorro 6:30 Guyferd 7:00 Ispup 8:00 Sing-Galing 9:00 Viva Cine Idols 11:00 Speed	5:30 Partners Mel & Jay 7:00 KI 8:30 Daddy Di Do Du 9:30 Sunday Night Box Office 11:20 Flash Report 11:30 Che-Che Lazaro Presents	6:00 Entertainment This Weekend 7:00 Ripley's Believe It or Not 8:00 Match TV 9:00 Sunday's Big Event 11:00 Sunday Report	5:00 PBA Games 9:30 Global Family Series 11:00 El Shaddai	6:00 Jimmy Neutron 6:30 Futurama 7:00 Digital tour 7:30 Spy TV 8:00 Yes Dear 8:30 Just Shoot Me 9:00 Will & Grace 9:30 The West Wing 10:30 Scariest Places on Earth 11:30 News Central	7:00 Sunday Mini-Series 8:00 Oh Tokyo 9:00 Sunday Night movies	5:30 CBS Evening News 6:00 E! Coming Attractions 6:30 FYE 7:00 E! Original Specials 8:00 Rank 9:00 Revealed w/ Jules Asner 10:00 Movies on E!
[illegible]	6:00 TV Patrol 6:30 Game K N B? 7:00 Kay Tagal Kang Hinintay 7:30 Basta't Kasama Kita 8:00 Darating Ang Umaga 8:30 Sana'y Wala Nang Wakas 9:00 Bida Si Mister, Bida Si Misis 11:00 Headlines 11:30 The Correspondents	6:00 14th Asian Games (Replay) 7:00 Strangebrew 7:30 In the Raw 8:00 TeleDyaryo 10:00 14th Asian Games (Replay)	6:00 Balitang-Balita 6:30 F 7:00 Mahha Go Go Go 7:30 Kool on Kam 8:30 That 70s Show 9:00 On Air 9:30 Misadventures of Maverick and Ariel 10:00 The Big News 10:30 Mad TV	6:00 Frontpage 6:40 Habang Kapiling Ka 7:20 Ang Iibigin Ay Ikaw Pa Rin 8:00 Sana Ay Ikaw Na Nga 8:40 Kung Mawawala Ka 9:20 Da Boy and Da Girl 10:30 Saksi 11:00 I-Witness	5:30 Arangkada Xtra Balita 6:00 Digmaan sa Iraq 6:30 Hot Ticket 7:00 Just for Laughs 8:00 Jag 9:00 Harsh Realm 10:00 Newswatch Now 10:30 Sex & the City	6:30 NBA Jam 7:00 NBA 2000 9:30 Global Family Series 10:30 IBC News Tonite 11:00 Linawin Natin	6:00 TV Patrol 7:00 Batman Beyond 7:30 Samurai X 8:00 Bully 9:00 Charmed 10:00 News Central 10:30 Oprah	6:30 Q Showcase 7:30 Oras ng Katotohanan 8:00 Q Showcase 9:00 Ang Dating Daan	6:00 E! News Live 7:00 Behind The Scenes 7:30 Mysteries & Scandals 8:00 E! True Hollywood Story 9:00 E! News Live 10:00 Best of Late Show 11:00 Wild On
[illegible]	6:00 TV Patrol 6:30 Game K N B? 7:00 Kay Tagal Kang Hinintay 7:30 Basta't Kasama Kita 8:00 Darating Ang Umaga 8:30 Sana'y Wala Nang Wakas 9:00 OK Fine! Whatever 11:00 Headlines 11:30 Mission X	6:00 14th Asian Games (Replay) 7:00 Strangebrew 7:30 In the Raw 8:00 TeleDyaryo 10:00 PBL	6:00 Balitang-Balita 6:30 Dragon League 7:00 2 Years Vacation w/ Dinosaurs 7:30 Kool on Kam 8:30 Brain Freeze 9:00 E.R. 10:00 The Big News 10:30 Wedding Works	6:00 Frontpage 6:40 Habang Kapiling Ka 7:20 Ang Iibigin Ay Ikaw Pa Rin 8:00 Sana Ay Ikaw Na Nga 8:40 Kung Mawawala Ka 9:20 Kool Ka Lang 10:30 Saksi 11:00 Probe Team	5:30 Arangkada Xtra Balita 6:00 Digmaan sa Iraq 6:30 Entertainment Tonite 7:00 Ed 8:00 Ally McBeal 9:00 The Practice 10:00 Newswatch Now 10:30 @ Ur Service (GSIS)	6:00 Game Channel 7:00 To Be Announced 9:30 Global Family Series 10:30 IBC News Tonite	6:00 TV Patrol 7:00 Batman Beyond 7:30 Samurai X 8:00 Dawson's Creek 9:00 Smallville 10:00 News Central 10:30 Oprah 11:30 Twilight Zone	6:30 Q Showcase 7:30 Oras ng Katotohanan 8:00 Ang Dating Daan	6:00 E! News Live 7:00 Extreme Close Up 7:30 Mysteries and Scandals 8:00 E! True Hollywood Story 9:00 E! News Live 10:00 David Letterman 11:00 Wild On
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Vilma enjoys 'reunion' celebration with her loyal fans

By Nestor U. Torre

VILMA Santos' loyal fans were so happy about her latest acting award at the Urian awards (for her performance in "Dekada '70") that they turned out in full force at her "reunion" celebration at Bakahan at Manukan on P. Guevarra st. in San Juan. Movie scribes with a soft spot in their hearts for Vi also showed up, making the evening a riotous success.

Fun and frolic

In the midst of all the fun and frolic, Vilma was able to sit with us for a spell, and breathlessly brought us up to date on what's been happening to her these past months, as well as gave us a peek into her future prospects.

First off, she's appreciative of the trophies that she's gotten for her intense but controlled performance in "Dekada '70," for which she swept the competition. But "grand slams" are no big deal for her, since she's scored three or four to date. As for Urian awards, she's won eight, making her the Manunuris' favorite thespian.

As Vilma matures as a performer, her portrayals are becoming more subtle and artistically judicious, providing a welcome alternative to the flamboyantly emotional performances turned in by younger actresses to prove their thespic mettle.

After winning scores of acting awards, Vilma has nothing more to prove, so she can more creatively concentrate on portraying complex characters to perfection.

Also noticeable at Vilma's instant victory party was her more youthful projection. There were times last year when she looked peaked and stressed, but she's apparently gotten over whatever was troubling her at that time, so she's looking fresh and vital.

In fact, when her son Luis Manzano showed up to provide added celebrity glitter, he and Vilma were kidded for looking like siblings.

Important

Vilma shares that her Urian victory has made her realize how important acting is to her, despite her similar success in the field of politics. In the past, she used to think of retiring from the big and small screens, to concentrate on public service and urban management. Now, however, she's sure that she'll continue to act "until I become a grandmother—like Gloria Romero."

This is a welcome development on the local film scene, which is notorious for its fetish for youth, and its bias against age and experience. With Gloria and now Vilma showing the way, our moviegoers can be educated to value veteran talents over callow starlets, so performances on the big screen can mature and deepen through time.

The future? Vilma wants to make one film a year, and is looking for challenging plots and characters. In politics, Vilma debunks rumors that she's going to run for senator next year.

Another term

In fact, she refuses to think of politics at all, preferring instead to concentrate on her work as mayor of Lipa City. But, if voters there want her to run for another term, our sense is that they won't have a hard time persuading her.

That's for next year, however. This year, Vilma is nixing all political speculations, because there's just so much work to be done.

As for her show biz career, Vilma intimates that her aborted TV series may see the light of the small screen this year, pending the resolution of the controversy over politicians working in other fields, show biz included.

This would really make Vilma's fans' *year* because they miss seeing her on TV once a week.

> She used to think of retiring from acting. Now, however, she's sure that she'll continue to act 'until I become a grandmother--like Gloria Romero'

SANTOS. More youthful projection.

MANZANO. Provided added celebrity glitter.

Plant trees for love of Father God and Mother Earth

IN the United Arab Emirates, the ruler has embarked on a massive forestation program. It is not only huge in terms of area but also in terms of effort. Due to lack of rains in that desert nation, black water hoses have to be installed to irrigate hectares of land. Precious water has to be diverted to nurture the trees until they survive on their own.

LOTUS POND

R. Valencia and S. Bismark

Survival

In the sizzling heat of the sun, the tree seedlings are truly so dependent on man's care for survival. Although it is a difficult task, the ruler is convinced that the greatest legacies he can bequeath to his people are these forests of trees.

In the Philippines, we are very fortunate to have more favorable conditions for planting trees. We only require greater commitment to build parks and forests for our citizens. Each town must allocate resources for landscaped parks and forests belts.

We often complain about flash floods, the intense heat of summer, or water shortage in many areas. The fact is, we have cut down trees and removed them from our list of basic physical necessities.

Oxygen

Trees do not only beautify the environment, but they also provide oxygen for us to breathe, shade to cool the earth and edible fruits to eat.

The strong roots of trees also create pathways for water to enter the underground water table. We need drinking water from wells and trees help water get to them. In addition, trees provide medicines for man to use.

Each person can contribute by planting one tree a year. When we help plant trees, we reap good karma. But higher than good karma is the love that we should manifest for Father God, Mother Earth and all other living entities.

Bantay Kalikasan

If we do not have land to plant trees on, let us assist orga-

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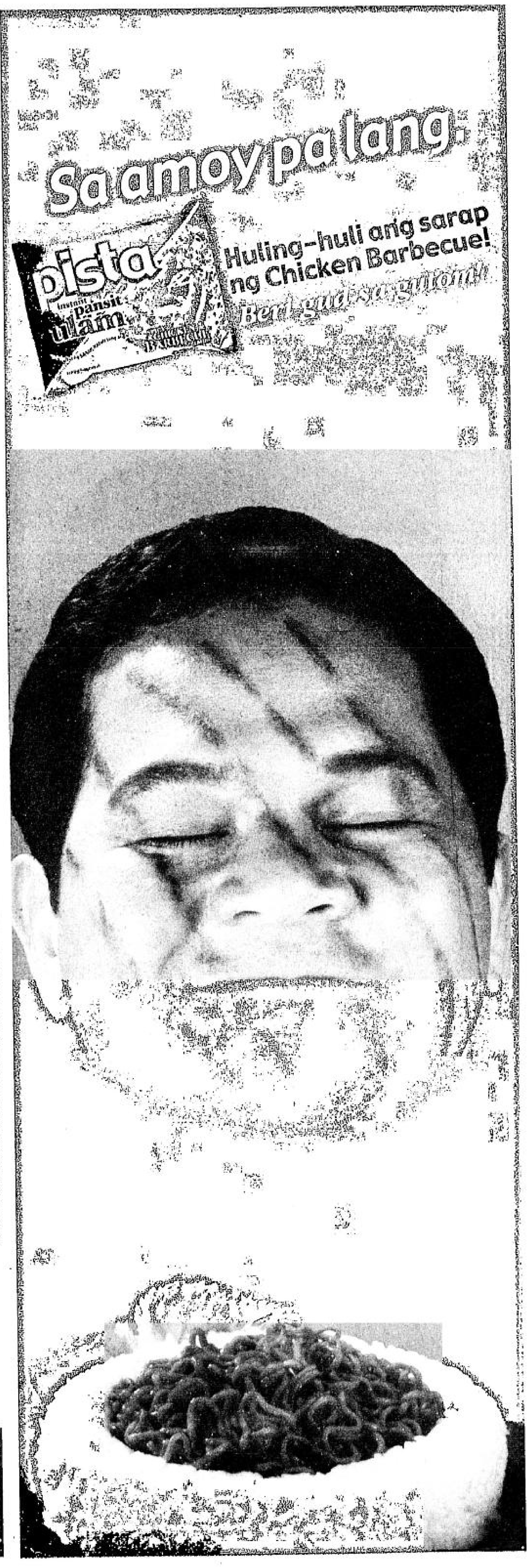


I remember Lino Brocka, way back when

By Behn Cervantes

I WAS a little irritated with my students. Why did they seem distracted and not excited about what I saying? I was, after all, talking about Lino Brocka's eminent role in the advancement of Philippine cinema and nationalism in the arts.

Contribution

I was leading into his participation in people's struggles before Edsa I. I was also going to point out his contribution to the Philippine Constitution, when as a member of the 1987 Constitutional Convention he included "freedom of expression" as a right of every Filipino citizen. This has forever insured artistic freedom in this country.

Why then did Lino seem alien to them?

Simple arithmetic made me realize that Lino passed away 12 years ago. If my students were 19 or 20 years old now, they were not even teenagers when Lino epitomized to the general public what a concerned artist should be.

On the other hand, I met Lino when he was still Catalino. This was many years before he became better known as Lino Brocka, the Filipino director who impressed international critics in film festivals in Cannes and San Sebastian, and was acclaimed by the British Film Institute as one of the world's best directors.

It was 1956 when we enrolled at UP as freshmen. Life was seemingly easy for teenagers in those days. We empathized with America's euphoria after the end of the Pacific War. Technicolor film spectacles, Balara, La Mesa Dam, bucolic Baguio, barn dances, Matorco rides down Dewey blvd. and *mami't siopao* symbolized the easy and inexpensive good times of that period.

We closely identified with Hollywood role models like Farley Granger and Ann Blyth, whose movie roles focused on their search for "the meaning of life." The more daring ones aped reckless Elvis Presley and oh-so-naughty Marilyn Monroe.

BROCKA directs Sharon Cuneta in "Pasan Ko ang Daigdig."

The intellectuals read Camus and other existential philosophers. Why, some even advocated socialist concepts and were rumored to be atheists! They discussed such topics with great fervor at the UP Liberal Arts Basement. The place was thick with cigarette smoke and the combination of constant laughter, fiery arguments, green jokes and simple gossip.

Those were happy times despite our self-inflicted angst. Nevertheless, Redemptorist priests threatened fire and brimstone during annual retreats.

Freshmen

A number of us green freshmen had the gall to join older university students who answered the "Audition" call of the UP Dramatic Club, the very prestigious association of thespians at the University of the Philippines, then under the tutelage of the renowned playwright Wilfrido Ma. Guerrero, Freddie to UPDC and distinguished alumni.

That roster included Celia Diaz Laurel, Joe Viterbo, Mitos Sison, Doy Laurel, Angelita Collas, Joy Gamboa Virata, Marce and Kit Viduya, Jose 'Jun' Roy, Tito Gupit and Cherry Santos. Phil Cabanos was designing his sets; engineering student Sonny Osmeña handled his lights.

Could we join that illustrious list of thespians? What an honor to work with such an accomplished director-playwright, we thought. No wonder freshmen like Jose Ma. Sison, Pinky Rigor Farolan, Carolina 'Bobbie' Malay Ocampo, George Moran Sison, Heidi de Peralta, Donnie Montelibano and myself auditioned for the Guerrero production of Thorton Wilder's "A Happy Journey From Trenton To Camden."

After strenuous public auditions, a select few were cast in the play. Also included was one Catalino Brocka from San Jose, Nueva Ecija. Ishmael Bernal, a year or two ahead of us, was among those who would work backstage later on.

New members

Since most of the new members were graduates of "exclusive" schools like Ateneo, La Salle, Assumption, Maryknoll, Holy Ghost, and UP High or UP Prep, we spoke (American) English well. We were therefore excused from doing the tongue-twisting "She sells sea shells by the seashore" and "Peter Piper" exercises. Alas, Catalino had to go through them.

The Eliot play would be twin-billed with Sartre's "No Exit," an existentialist play that had reaped critical praise during its summer run. The cast of "No Exit" was headed by Jun Roy, Rita Kalaw Ledesma, Phil Cabanos and Kit Viduya. Marita Adolfo Viduya, or Kit to all her friends at UP, was a spellbinding Estelle.

I think "No Exit" was the dramatic turning point in our salad years because, soon after, Lino, Joonee Gamboa, Adul de Leon and I became a gang of serious theater and movie buffs. We sat, attentive and critical, at any and all theater productions in Manila. We even observed theater "sessions" where more mature actors like Tita Muñoz, Nick Agudo and Butch Josue went through Actors' Studio techniques under a visiting American stage actor.

Awesome production

Bert Avellana's "My Name Is Legion" was another awesome production, along with Daisy Avellana as the sleepwalking lady in "Macbeth In Black."

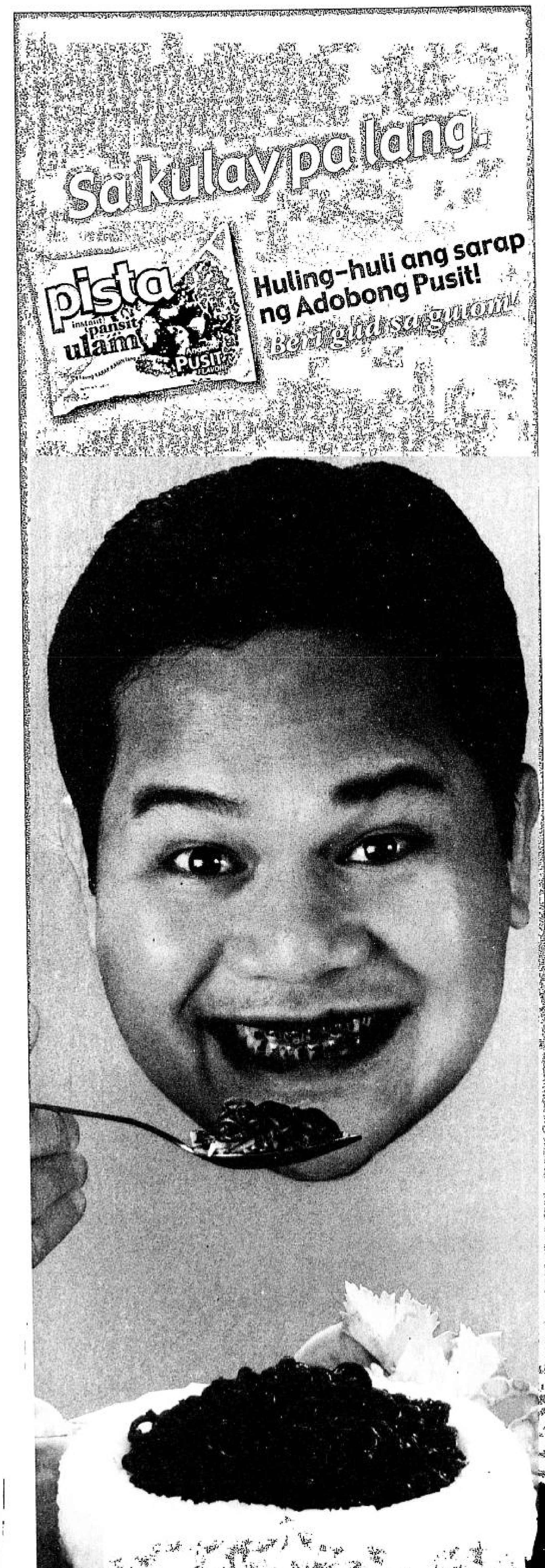
When we could afford it, we would see the plays of the Manila Theater Guild at the exclusive Army-Navy Club, where expats enjoyed what were then the most polished stage productions in the city.

Since we were inveterate moviegoers, we would also regularly see films together and, over Ma Mon Luk's *pansit' siopao*, compare insights on production, acting, directing and scripting. Simone Signoret's quiet but seething intensity in "Room At The Top" was akin to Kit's performance in "No Exit," we thought. She remains one of my favorite stage actresses to this day.

Lino was her great fan and friend, too. In fact, Lino often slept over in their little bungalow near the LVN compound in San Juan.

(To be concluded)

> I met Lino when he was still Catalino-- many years before he became the Filipino director acclaimed by the British Film Institute as one of the world's best filmmakers



SWITCHING CHANNELS

Why GMA's low ratings can't be attributed to signal distortion

By Edmund L. Sicam

IF ABS-CBN is winning the ratings game as admitted by both leading networks, GMA seems to be winning the media war on the signal distortion issue. The "Kapuso" network has been claiming that their signals have been distorted by Beyond Cable's Sky Cable, Home Cable and Pilipino Cable Corp., when they effected channel reassignments that affected all the VHF channels.

Because of these alleged distortions, which GMA claims happen during the time slots of their more popular programs, their ratings have dropped.

Media mileage

GMA has been able to get a lot of media mileage by making their top executives accessible to the print media. In contrast, ABS-CBN's top executives have not been as open to media and have left the talking to network vice president Maloli Manalastas.

Before examining the distortion issue, I'd like to zero in on the network's claim that its lower ratings were caused by the poor signals to the cable homes seriviced by BCI. I am told that there are about 3.5 million television households in Mega Manila. Of these, 800,000 are connected to cable. Assuming without admitting that the signals to the BCI homes are somehow tampered with, how can they affect the overall ratings in a big way when there are 2.7 million non-cable homes? Add to this number, the non-BCI cable homes and it becomes even more difficult to accept the GMA claim that their low ratings are caused by tampered signals.

On the distortion issue, GMA has been able to create doubts in the minds of consumers that their signals are distorted by constantly flashing on the screen numbers for viewers to call. It has also issued press statements that 68 percent of complains received by their hotline came from BCI subscribers. GMA has already filed a case regarding this matter. So far, however, BCI's legal counsel Gerry Ramiro tells me that the network has not provided his office with the list of complainants.

Complaining subscriber

In one instance, GMA engineers accompanied Steve Watson, PCC's regional director for the Greater Manila Area, to a complaining subscriber picked at random by GMA. They found out that the TV set was defective and got bad signals from all the channels. GMA's engineering team even went to PCC's head-end site where the programs emanate and determined that there was no distortion, according to Watson.

The network war is turning out to be a battle of images. BCI is being projected as the cable giant, the neighborhood bully, and in fact has been accused by GMA of being a monopoly. Indirectly, GMA is also hitting ABS-CBN because it is a Lopez company the same way BCI is perceived to be a Lopez company.

I am told that although Benpres (the Lopez holding company) owns two-thirds of BCI with PLDT owning one-third, it will ultimately sell half of its holdings to another investor. Until that time comes, BCI is perceived as part of the Lopez group.

Signal

As a giant, the Lopez-dominated BCI has the power to crush the opposition by tampering with the signal of ABS-CBN's closest competitor. GMA is projected as the persecuted channel that is inching up closer to ABS-CBN despite the signal problem. So if the network's programs are not rating as well as they should, blame it on the Lopezes.

Shouldn't GMA look inwards and instead ask its programming department to study why its shows are lagging behind the Star Network?

The question, of course, is why change the channel assignments at all? BCI's marketing head Joy Santos says BCI wanted to improve both the audio and video signals of the VHF channels. It's a marketing move designed to attract more non-cabled homes to cable TV. Why shift from non-cable to cable when the quality of the signals is virtually the same as before? One incentive for a shift to cable is to show consumers that they receive better-quality pictures via cable compared to VHF transmissions.

Pressing problem

One pressing problem in the industry is that many cable connections are actually illegal, meaning they don't pay fees to the cable companies. With typical Filipino ingenuity, many TV owners manage to connect to cable by riding on another household's signal.

The result is a drop in the quality of the reception because there are too many sets connected to the line.

BCI and other outfits are now considering shifting to a system where only legitimate subscribers equipped with a black box can receive the scrambled signals. Because of the investment involved, the companies are taking their time implementing the system.

If cable companies are suffering from losses today, you can blame it on the way cable started in the country. There was no system in the approval of permits, so the cable companies mushroomed and, because of the competitive situation, they offered attractive deals to prospective subscribers. That meant offering their services at cutthroat rates.

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From page D5

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BEST COPY AVAILABLE

'Matrix' sequel gives moviegoers their money's worth

By Noelani Torre

DESPITE its shortcomings, we confess that we loved 1999's "The Matrix." It was fast, had great special effects and just enough abstruse philosophizing to make everything seen deeper and meatier. (The what-is-real thing always works with our generation.)

General rule

Thus we had high expectations for "The Matrix's" sequel, "The Matrix: Reloaded," unwisely disregarding the more or less general rule about sequels—that like books turned into movies, they often disappoint.

To be fair, however, we must say that this sequel didn't disappoint us too much. Most of the time, we did enjoy ourselves, and we never really expected much of Keanu Reeves in the acting department, anyway.

The problem with "Reloaded" began even before its release. It suffers from over-hyping and an excess of anticipation.—After that, anything is bound to be a letdown.

Also, unlike in "The Matrix," more or less everything we see in "Reloaded" is something we've already seen before—in the first movie and in countless imitations. That slow-mo bullet thing, for example, is no longer new. Since the first "Matrix," it has been overused in numerous other films.

Fun upgrades

The special effects are thus less impressive, though they've also made some fun upgrades, like the fight scene between Neo (Keanu Reeves) and a hundred Mr. Smiths (Hugo Weaving). The ghostly twins were also a nice touch, though they weren't there for long.

Speaking of the Neo-Mr. Smith fight scene, we have to say that we found it a little pointless, especially when Neo just flies off *ala* Superman in the end. It went on for the longest time (10 minutes? 15?—*too long*), and when Neo shoots to the sky, we think, why didn't he do that earlier?—Preferably, *eight minutes* earlier.

The first half of the movie was a little disjointed, and anyone who hasn't seen the first "Matrix" won't understand anything. We finally get to see Zion, the underground haven of the humans, but it isn't an impressive as we expected it to be—just a lot of pipes and gray metal.

Adding to the rambling feel are overlong action scenes like the aforementioned Neo and Mr. Smith brawl, and another celebratory orgiastic scene in Zion, which is downright strange.

More cohesive

The second half is more cohesive, as the Oracle finally gives Neo and Co. a specific goal—find a program called the Keymaker, which will, in turn, lead them to the Source, which is something like the heart of the Matrix. Or something.

There's a great deal of psychobabble here that we could have done without, as it only serves to add to our confusion. Such statements as "If you know what I know then I know you know" made us want to scream our way out of the theater.

In their search for the Keymaker, we get another overlong scene that could have been great if it were shorter. The car chase involving the Keymaker and the humans, agents, and ghostly twins (actually independent programs) was terribly exciting at first, but got tiresome after 10 minutes. Trinity, played by Carrie Anne Moss, was cool throughout, however, and we can't imagine a "Matrix" without her.

Unlike Reeves, Moss' silent look doesn't result in an air of lifelessness, but of quiet strength and intelligence. She's one of the movie's pluses, and her character is refreshingly un-bimbo-like.

Lawrence Fishburne's performance as Morpheus was as solid as ever, though we thought his Zion speech too pompous by half. His character gets a love interest in the form of Captain Niobe, played by Jada Pinkett Smith, another slick, ass-kicking non-bimbo.

Our favorites, however, would be the programs, not the machines—the Oracle, Mr. Smith, and the Merovingian (the evil program that guards the Keymaker).

KEANU Reeves, right, tries to shake off Hugo Weaving's stranglehold in "Matrix Reloaded."

Bracingly normal

One of the movie's best scenes is between Neo and the Oracle (Gloria Foster), which is bracingly normal and actually serves to further the plot.

Hugo Weaving as Mr. Smith is supremely cool and manages to be funny despite being a robotic non-human, and Lambert Wilson as the Merovingian is the scene-stealing archetypal suave frenchie. His "wife," Persephone, played by a delicious Monica Belluci, is equally distracting.

The movie ends with a cliffhanger which practically requires you to watch Part Three, due later this year. Let's hope it's better.

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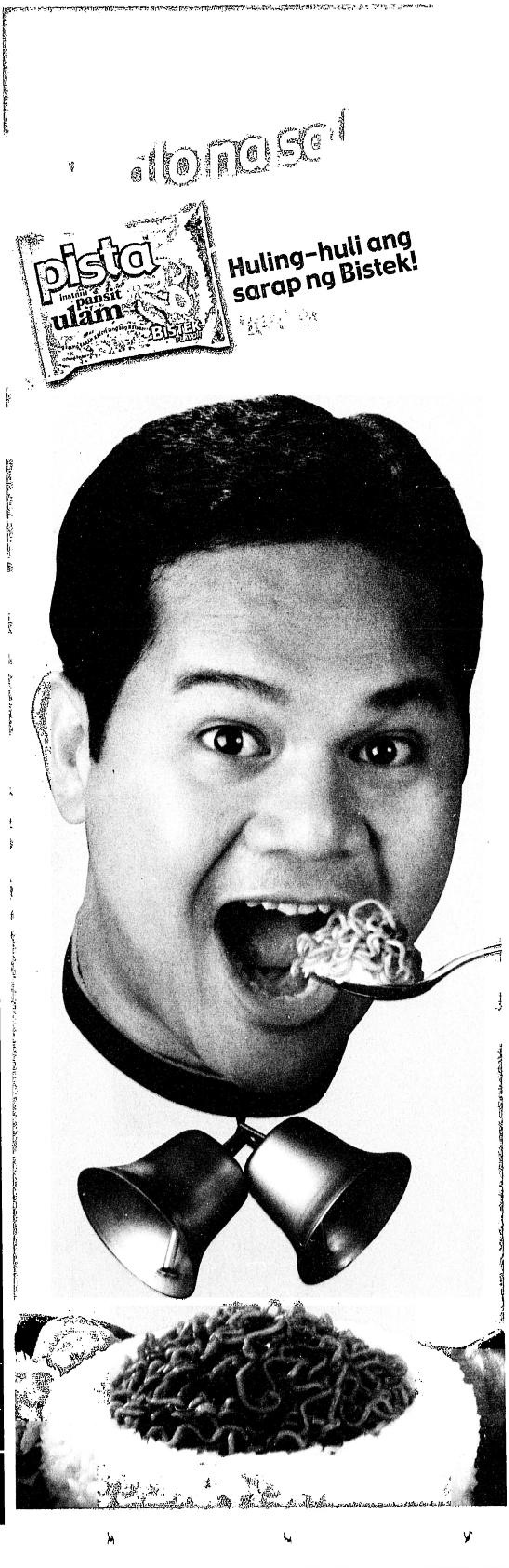

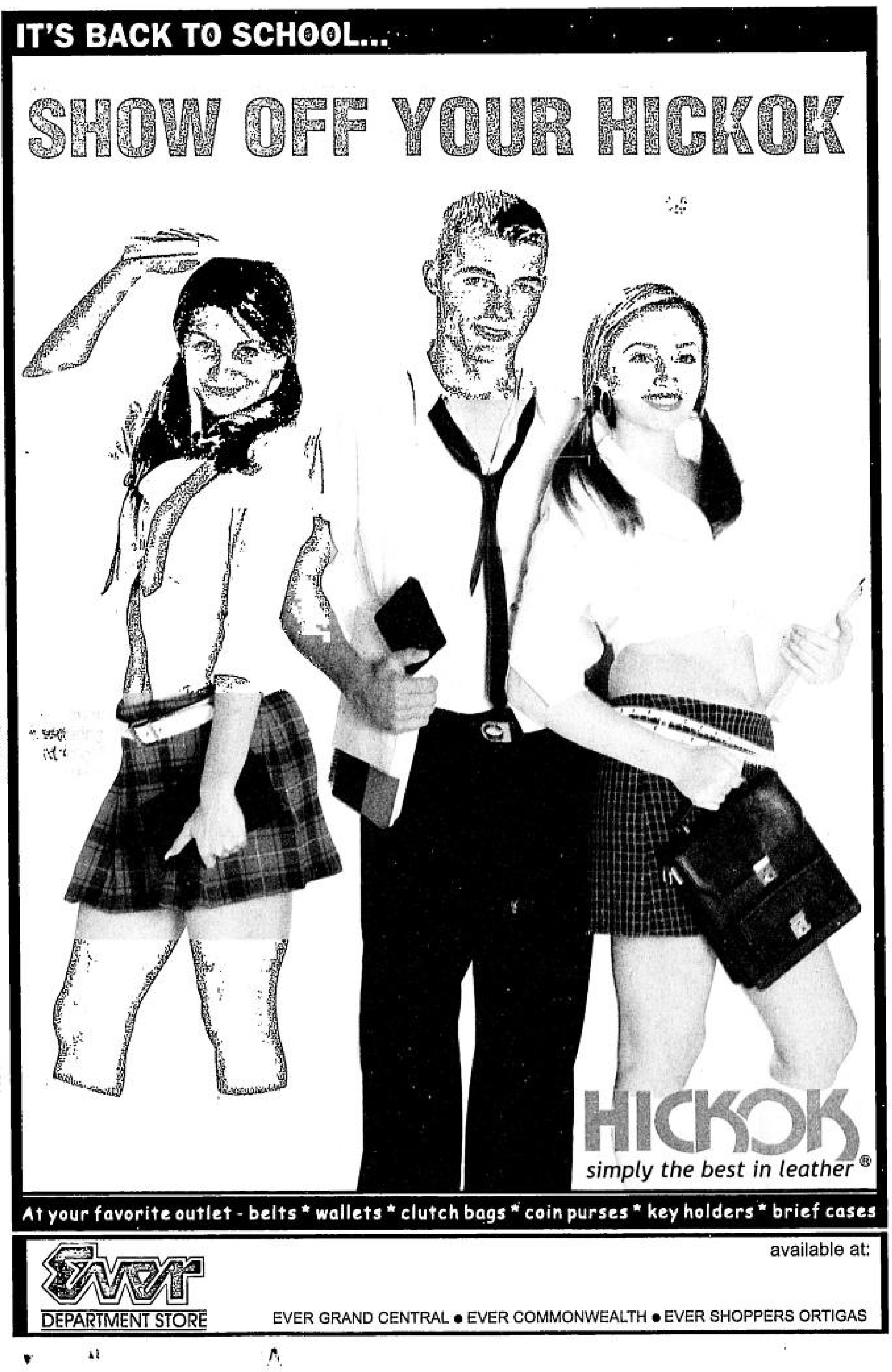

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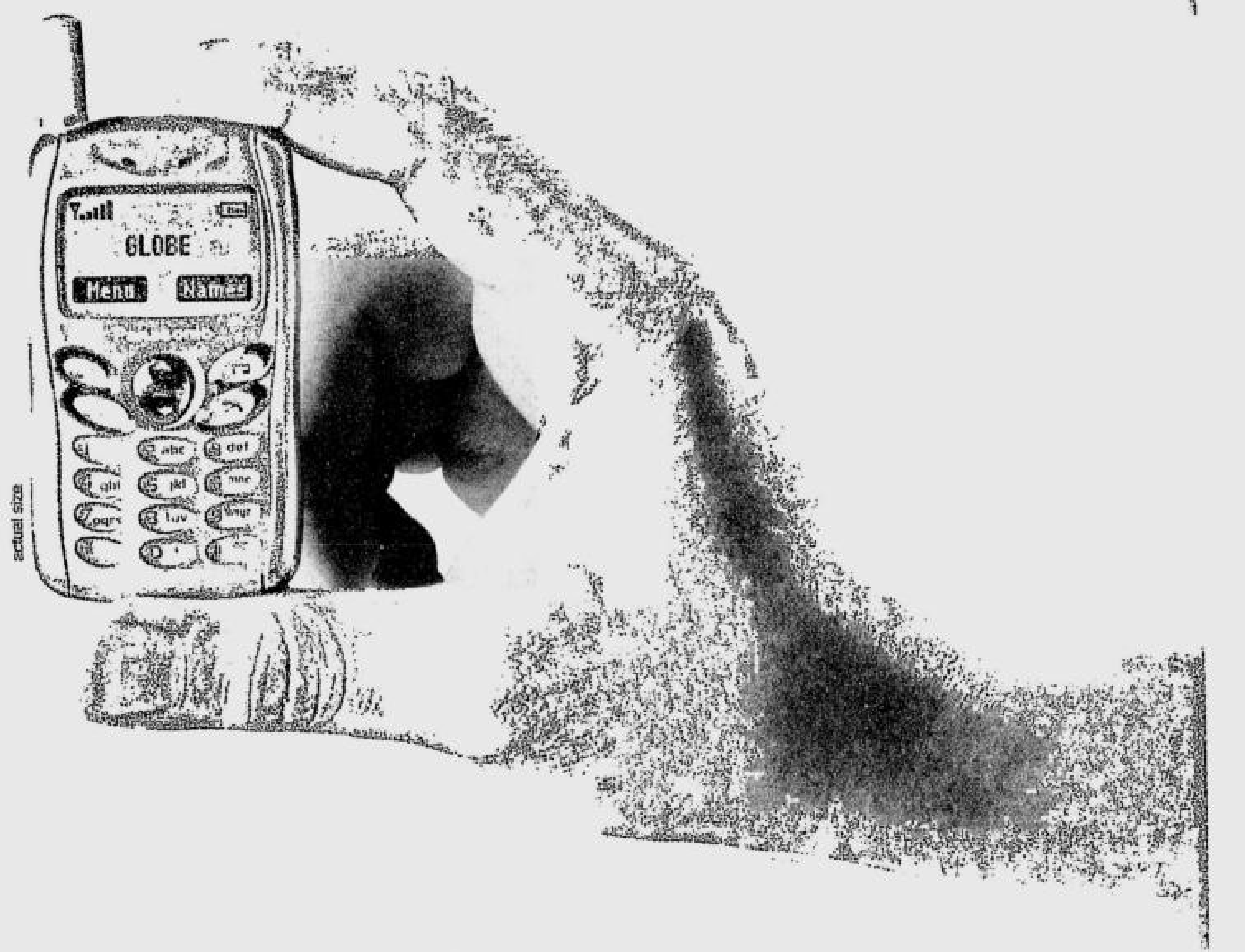

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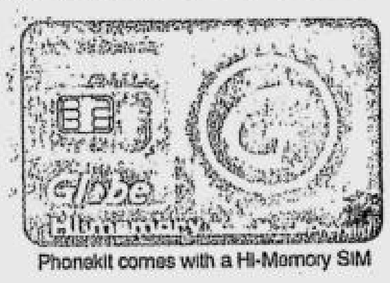

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SATURDAY Special Super!

Contributing Editor **Pam Pastor**
Creative Director **Tim Yap**

Something Super ahead of you

THERE should be some play.

Each week, we take you on a road trip through thematic twists inside a scenester's mind. What to do, where to go, who to see--think of it as your weekend gig guide around the urban scene.

We present you a visual pop gallery of ideas, a style lab of funky fashion and a fun folio of fab stuff.

Since this is our birth issue, we compiled close to a hundred super! personalities to share with us their baby moments.

Tals Diaz chronicles celebrity firsts, Caloy Garchitorena returns to the Inquirer via his column, "Mr.-Know-It-All," Lex Ledesma debuts as a showbiz thinker in SWAK, DJs Wendell Garcia and Adrian Cuenca provide us partyphiles with a list of hot, hot events and nightly gigs and Tim Yap takes us through his whirlwind round of parties.

We get to hang out with the new MTV VJs Johan Ekedum and Patty Laurel, and get to dress up "it" boy and F&H endorser Zak Hogen-esh.

In "24 Hours," we get to hang out with an icon, an up and coming star or a celebrity of our choice and spend more time than we can ever imagine. This issue, Pam Pastor hangs with crooner Paolo Santos--they make beautiful music together.

For "Inspiration Sandwich," we give space to an artist, photographer, designer, anybody creative--to splurge and flow with images--to use the blank page as their canvas. Mind candy, if you wanna call it that.

"Inspiration is the string of our dreams. Dreams are the fabric of our future," the wise say. Weave them together with optimism, faith and action and see a SUPER! fulfilled life. Dream, on, party on.

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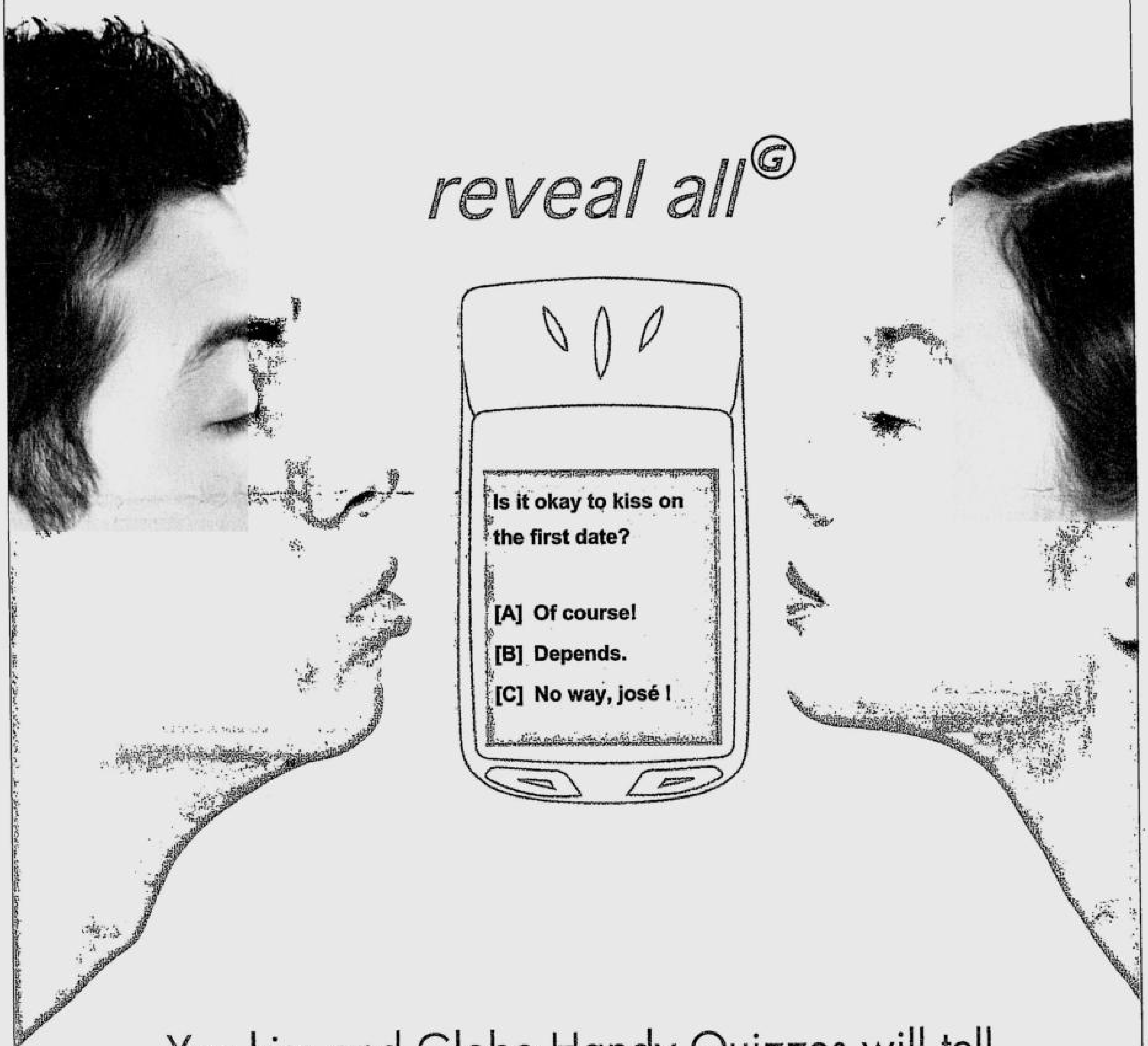
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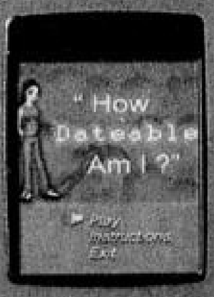

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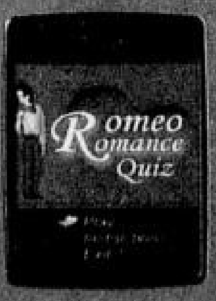

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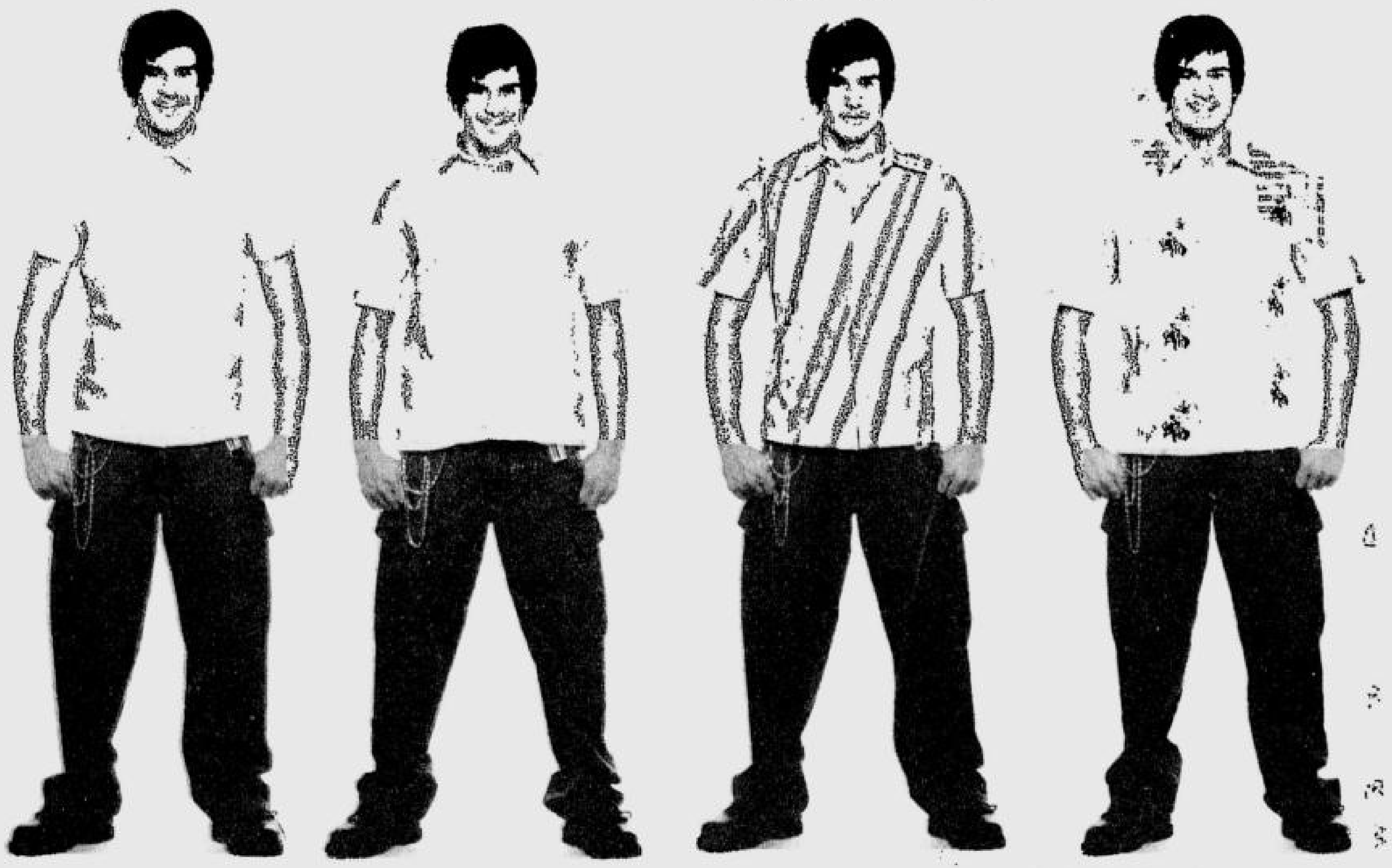

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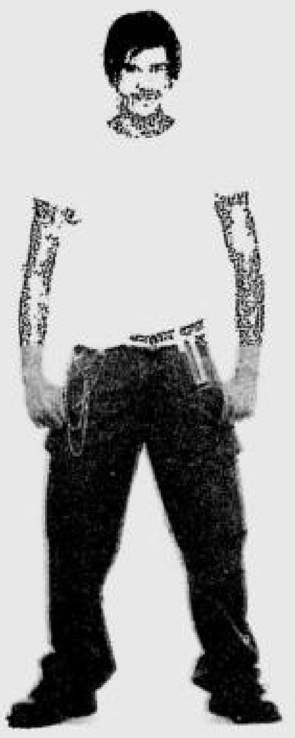

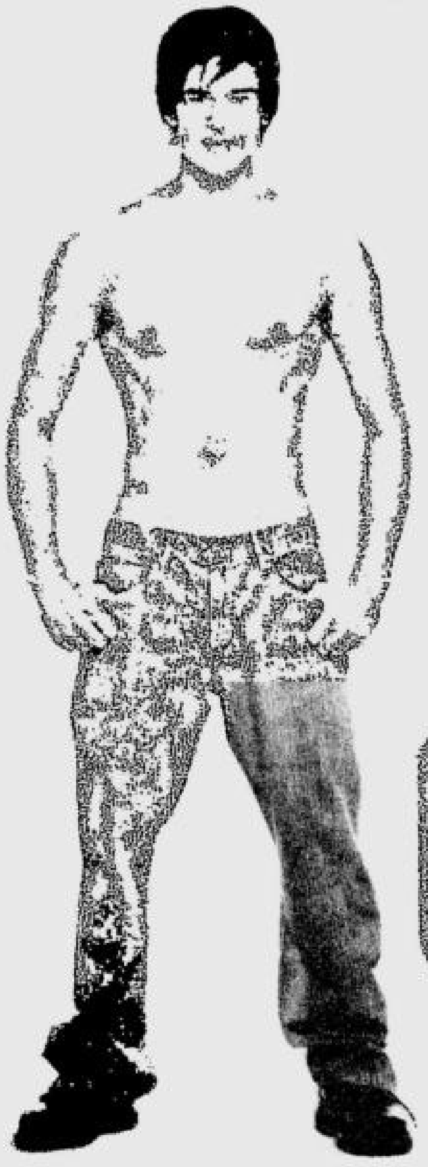

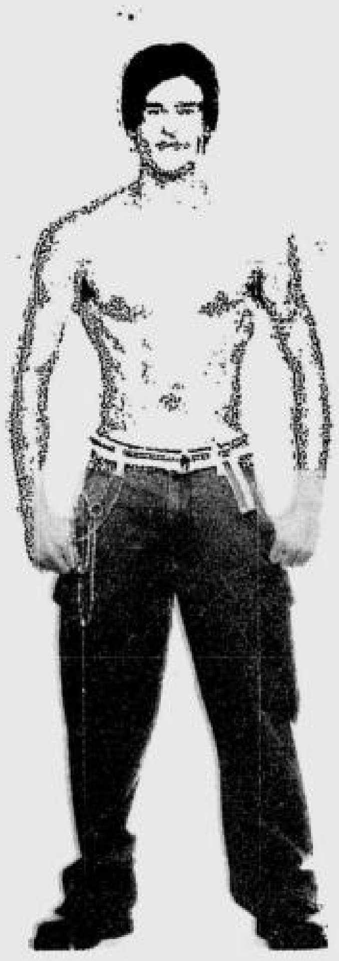

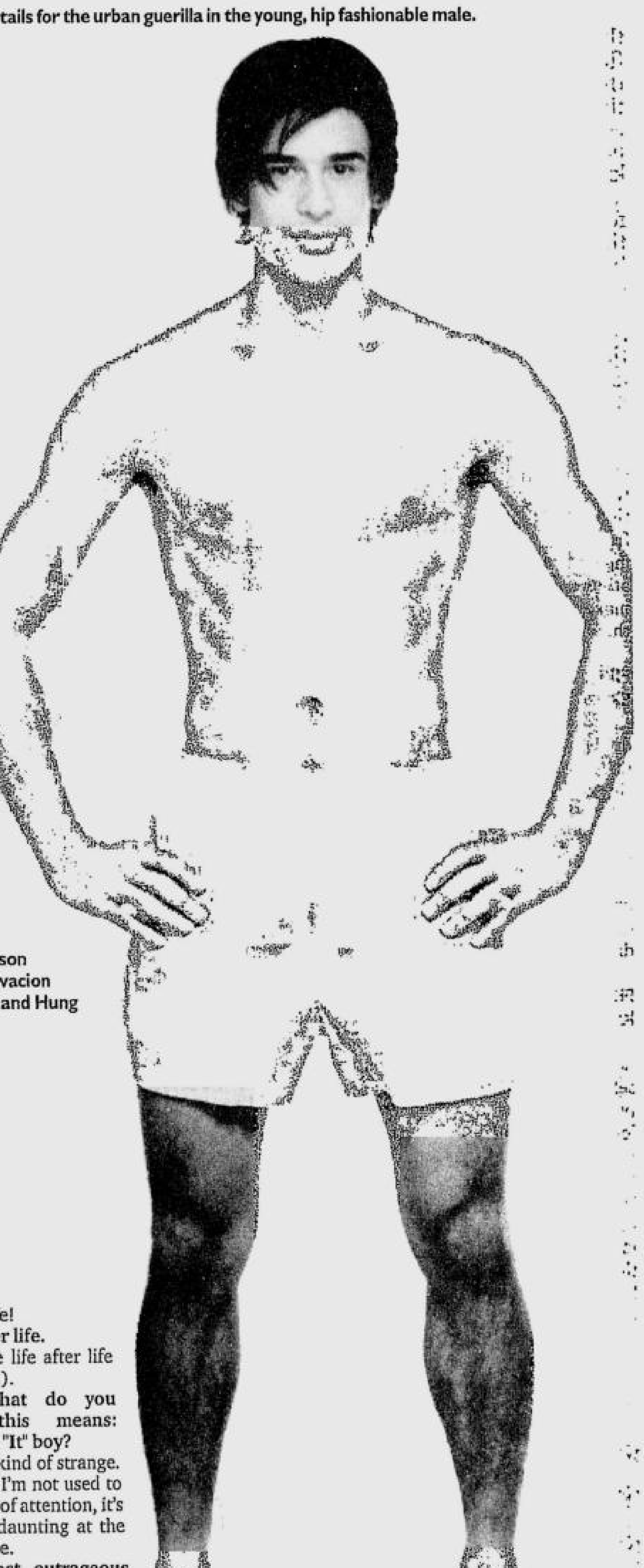

Baby Zak!

Text by Tim Yap
Styling by Chechel Joson
Photos by Ronnie Salvacion
All clothes by Folded and Hung

ZAK, Zak, Zak. You've seen him everywhere. Turn on your boob tube and there he is, entering a bar looking for the girl with the Coke Light, flashing his Close Up smile, talking on his Globe Handyphone--in short, he is ubiquitous.

The male image model for hip brand Folded and Hung, or F&H as it is popularly known remains low-key, and prefers to be in comfortable casuals wherever he goes. Cargo pants and pastel shirts, neutrals and fresh stripes are his wardrobe staples.

So go ahead, make him your doll. Dress him up, or dress him down.

Tim: Where are you from? Where are you now? Where are you headed?

Zak: Where am I from? Born in Malaysia, brought up in Australia, I'm an Aussie. Where am I now? In the Philippines, Manila. Where am i headed? Around the world, this is my first stop of 11 countries, next are: Thailand, Germany, France, Italy, Switzerland, United Kingdom, United States, Japan, Singapore, then home.

T: Do you think you're just another pretty face?

Z: You must have the wrong person. No, actually, I consider myself an extremist. I model only to travel and make money whilst doing it.

T: Say the first thing that comes to your mind....

TV show....

Z: Matrix—all time classic.

T: Body part.

Z: Nose—don't know why, it was just the first thing I thought of.

T: Color.

Z: Grey—I like wearing grey.

T: History.

Z: Repeats itself.

T: Vice.

Z: Grand theft auto-vice city; love that game.

T: Virtue.

Z: Music—can't live without it.

T: Sex.

Z: Mile High Club.

T: Religion.

Z: Sacrifice.

T: Life.

Z:
Live life!

T: After life.

Z: Live life after life (ha ha ha).

T: What do you think this means: Manila's "It" boy?

Z: It's kind of strange. Actually, I'm not used to this kind of attention, it's fun but daunting at the same time.

T: Most outrageous thing you've gotten away with just because you're cute?

Z: I converted a lesbian, nah, just jokin'.
I got out of a speeding ticket after being pulled over by a lady cop.

T: Your favorite muscle and how you keep it toned...

Z: Triceps, I guess... Rock climbing and doing dips.

T: Greatest and worst Manila memory?

Z: Greatest: meeting so many friendly people. Worst: traffic—I hate the traffic.

T: What will your last meal be if executed tomorrow?

Z: A tube of Pringles. For those who already know me, I should have shares of stock in that company. Mmm... Pringles!

T: Person(s) to contact in case of emergency:

Z: My girlfriend Roisin, my parents, my brother Joe, my sister Nina, my grandparents, my bestfriends, my cat Freckles.

T: The Zak we don't know:

Z: (Roisin interrupts). Zak is super sweet and romantic—he writes me poems and sings to me! He is a complete junk food addict and also an adrenaline junkie!—Don't believe her, it's all LIES, except for the junk food addict and adrenaline junkie. I'm a ramp and street skater, rock climber, snow boarder and mountain biker. I played for 'Team Australia' in Spain for the 2001 Inline Hockey World Championships, that's probably my greatest life achievement so far.

Quirky Firsts

A funky little collection of memories from some of Manila's prime movers, from actors to athletes, fashionistas to filmmakers

By Natalia Diaz

THERE is something that can be utterly fascinating about the first time. That is, the first time for anything—for although the first may not necessarily equate to the best, there never really is the same kind of thrill, cause for amusement or catalyst for nostalgia as that first time. Think about it: Nobody really writes songs or proposes a toast to your second kiss, your second wife or the third time you got so drunk and vomited your innards at a party.

Thus, eliciting a few blushes and bewildered reactions, we've come up with a funky little collection of memories from some of Manila's prime movers, ranging from actors to athletes, fashionistas to filmmakers, all recalling a few of their quirky "firsts."

FIRST DRUNKEN EXPERIENCE, Robin da Roza

"I was only 8 when I first got drunk! My sister, who was 10 at that time, and I were at my Tita Gloria's place. My Tita always filled her vodka bottles with water and stocked them in the same rack with the rest of the vodka-filled bottles. One time, I got a bottle with *konti lang* left in it and downed it. Before I knew it, I was drunk!"

FIRST FASHION FAUX PAS, Kitty Go

"I think a fashion faux pas is not exactly the choice of outfit itself, but God knows so many people have committed that sin. Just look at a local show biz awards night and you'll know what I mean. You can make a 500-page "Don't" Fashion special out of those. Many fashion mistakes are made by wearing some THING at the wrong time—a Liza Bruce bikini at a nudist beach, for example. I came back from a holiday and went back to my university (and for sure this was between 1980 and 1984) in leggings and scrunched socks with sneakers and a multi-colored headband, which were what New Yorkers were then wearing thanks to "Flashdance" and Olivia Newton-John. Perhaps due to the slow dissemination of information at that time—*wala pang* Internet and pirated DVDs—the entire Ateneo population thought I looked like Big Bird. In many ways they were right. Why the hell do you think this look never came back? Even Olivia Newton-John knew better and never dared stage a comeback! Unlike John Travolta who, like the mini skirt, tried and succeeded."

FIRST BAD DATE, Brad Turvey

"My first ever bad date was an attempted outdoor picnic and it ended with a kiss, only to be interrupted by a passing group of my friends who made me *kulit!*"

FIRST PASSIONATE RELATIONSHIP, Miriam Quiambao

"I wasn't as passionate as a kid as I am now and my passion came late for me. It was when I joined the group Ang Lingkod ng Panginoon after college that I discovered a relationship with Christ and was able to reach the greatest and innermost corners of my emotional and passionate self. I'm no longer active with the group but the passion for truth, service and love as well as the value for a relationship with The Father remains."

FIRST FLICK, Carlo Ledesma

"The first movie I ever remember watching was "The Empire Strikes Back" on Betamax. And The Force has been with me ever since."

FIRST NEAR-DEATH EXPERIENCE, Miguel Zubiri

"It was while white-water rafting on the Tuolomne River in Northern California with my sister Bea and two of our friends. We were all first timers, but we went ahead to a Class 4 river, a really advanced stage. It had a cascading waterfall, which was the most dangerous part of the trip. As soon as we took off, something went wrong, and we hit a rock at the top of the cascading waterfall and we all fell out! All I could see were white bubbles in front of my face, and I kept my feet in front of my body to push off any rocks. But the scariest thought I had was about my sister, Bea, because if anything happened to her I would never have forgiven myself! Finally, after 10 minutes of agony, the river guide told me that Bea was able to get out."

FIRST ONSCREEN AND OFFSCREEN HERO, Monsour del Rosario

"My very first hero was my dad, until I was around 9 or 10 years old. Then I discovered Bruce Lee, he became my ultimate hero and idol. I wanted to be as cool as him. He inspired me to be a great martial artist in my own way. Later on came my grandmaster in Tae Kwon Do, six-time world champion Sung Chun Hung."

FIRST ACT OF REBELLION, Audrey Tan

"My first *takas* was in school ... since my school was right across Robinson's Galleria, it was really exciting for us then, until we got back to school and the principal found out. We were sent to her office and placed under probation. After that, it was one big drama session, so looking back now, it really wasn't all that great."

FIRST RECORD COLLECTION, Manolet, Teddy and Robert Dario

"We had collected hundreds of 45 rpm records which we would buy together with our allowance. That was around 1975, a long time ago! A number of those LP titles were The Commodores' 'Machine Gun,' 'City of Angels' by The Miracles, 'Love is the Message' by T.S.O.P., 'Love to Love You Baby' by Donna Summer, 'Rock the Boat' by Hues Corporation, 'Brazil/Hot Trip' by The Ritchie Family, 'Loves' Theme' by Barry White, 'Rhapsody in Blue' by Eumir Deodato, 'I'll Play the Fool' by Dr. Buzzard's Original Savannah Band and 'Marvin Gaye Live.'"

FIRST ROLE MODEL, Stephanie Zubiri

"My dad was my first role model. Ever since I was small, I saw how close he was to people and he taught me how to reach out and give a part of myself to the community."

FIRST ORIGINAL DESIGN, Kate Torralba

"My first design was back in grade school; it was an outfit for my Barbie doll. The stuff in the stores just wouldn't do so I had a *kustorera* make her a teeny little party dress for her 'birthday.' It was pink and lacy. Sadly, I sold all my Barbies at a garage sale. That would've been such a relic!"

FIRST BIG PARTY, Domini Primero, Bigfish Entertainment

"The first Bigfish party we ever had was also the first building party in the city. It was 'Strikezone Dropping' in February of 1999 at Strikezone along Roxas Boulevard. Four floors with four DJs, Manolet Dario of NBK, Bobet Villaluz of 78Orange, Erwin Edralin of abg's and Carlo Aquino of Sambo. We had about 2,500 attendees.

FIRST MODELING ASSIGNMENT, Myrza Sison

"It was a food court fashion show at SM City in 1988. I came onstage in an outfit that still had a tag hanging from one of the sleeves! I got paid P500 and I looked like an idiot but I was thrilled to do it. I thought no one would ever know, it was my little secret, until an officemate who just happened to be on the escalator saw me and asked the next day if that was really me!"

FIRST DATE, Cheska Garcia

"My first date was in Gold Ranch when I was 14 years old, on Valentine's Day. It was a group date, I had a lot of fun because I was with my friends, and the guys who were going for us. We entered the place, we had flowers, but I kinda felt awkward because everybody else in that restaurant was a lot older than us, and some were looking at us. I guess they were wondering what us young people were doing, dating already on Valentine's Day? But basically, it was a fun night, except for the momentary stares when we walked in."

FIRST INSPIRATION FOR A SONG, Cynthia Alexander

"My first song was written from a dream. I dreamt the song, and it woke me up and I wrote it. It was a simple case of remembering and putting to sound what I 'heard.' Now when I write songs, I write with insight. A matter of 'seeing.' Everything ordinary triggers the Extraordinary."

FIRST PIECE OF WOMEN'S CLOTHING, Angelo Villanueva

"My first ever piece of women's clothing was a pair of Italian blue velvet hipster bell bottoms by Bessozi from my *lola!*"

FIRST ALBUM, Toti Dalmacion

"I had a lot of exposure to music since birth, but I do think I bought my first 45 single via my folks of course in 1975 or 76. An approximation would be Stevie Wonder's Superstition or Jet - Paul McCartney & Wings."

FIRST ODD JOB, Rissa Mananquil Samson

"When I was in grade school, I created my own newspaper with articles on fashion, food and events which I wrote myself. Sort of like a village newspaper. I photocopied my original layout for 25 centavos and sold the copies to my neighbors and relatives for one peso!"

FIRST HOBBY, Quark Henares

"My first hobby was reading comics and making mini comics of my own. I was 10 years old."

FIRST STORY, Karen Kunawicz

"I remember my first attempt at writing and drawing a storybook. It was about a traveling musician named Bernard who lost his guitar. He went around a medieval town, knocking on doors and asking the townsfolk and even the farm animals if they had seen his guitar. Then he met a highly intelligent duck who told him he had been carrying the guitar all along on his back. (I guess it must have been a very small, very light guitar for him not to notice!). I was 7 when I did that. The only reason I remember it was because I found it eight years ago when I moved house."

FIRST GIG, Kevin Roy

"My first gig with the band was at Kalye, I had to study 30 songs but of course, since it's impossible to memorize 30 songs in such a short time, I faked about half of it. I sang in Japanese, Chinese and German! I also remember one of our first gigs, it was at a rehab center in Bicutan of all places! We performed alongside the Rey Cards would you believe! We did a lot of Pinoy rock songs back then, like 'Balong Malalim' and 'Palengke.' The tricky part there was that a lot of the songs were about drugs so we had to be extra careful singing about them to the rehab patients."

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24 hours with Paolo Santos

Text and photos by Pam Pastor

PAOLO Santos has come a long way from being a middle child sandwiched by a brilliant sister set on becoming a doctor and an athletic sister who started playing tennis competitively at the age of eleven. His older sister is now a doctor, his younger sister part of the Philippine Team for tennis and Paolo isn't doing bad himself.

He has established his name in the music industry, quite a feat for someone who has yet to launch a full album. He put up Acoustic Gold Productions, an independent label, in the desire to keep his integrity and help other artists and musicians who wish to play music without having to sacrifice their principles. Three weeks ago, he came out with his first single, "Play With Me" and his followers have been snapping it up from record stores. Countless people flock to his gig venues, even in the worst weather conditions. He recently finished writing a commercial jingle for Close-Up. Just last weekend, he had a very successful two-night show at Onstage Greenbelt. A couple of months from now, he will be playing in Duncan Sheik's show in Manila. And in late June or early July, Paolo will be releasing his album - six years' worth of songwriting, according to him.

Indeed, he has a gone a long way. And he never saw this coming.

Paolo just picked up the guitar when he was a high school freshman at the Ateneo. "It was just a hobby." Although he wanted to take music in college, his parents wanted him to get a degree first. He chose Economics and graduated from De La Salle University. After living abroad for a while, a string of events led him back to Manila where he decided to pursue a career in the corporate world. He was earning well but it wasn't really what he wanted to do. At the suggestion of a friend, who heard him play the guitar and sing during their drinking sessions, he started playing in small bars. He kept playing for two years and got a stint at Wave 89.1. The biggest roller coaster ride, he says, was in October 2002. Word got around about the acoustic singer whose falsetto was so powerful that he can sing like a woman. "I was suddenly surrounded by media. It was very surreal."

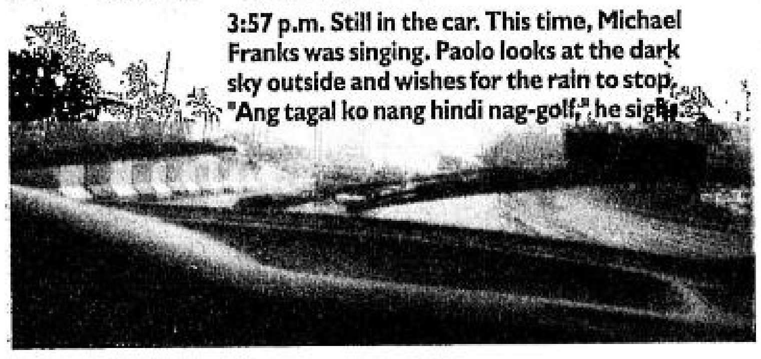
The success hasn't affected Paolo much. Yes, he loves what he does but he doesn't let it get to him. And perhaps, it is the fact that he has kept his feet on the ground that is continuing to draw people in.

Twenty-four hours with Paolo was easy, pretty much like hanging out with your college barkada. He was relaxed and unguarded. He acted like a normal person.

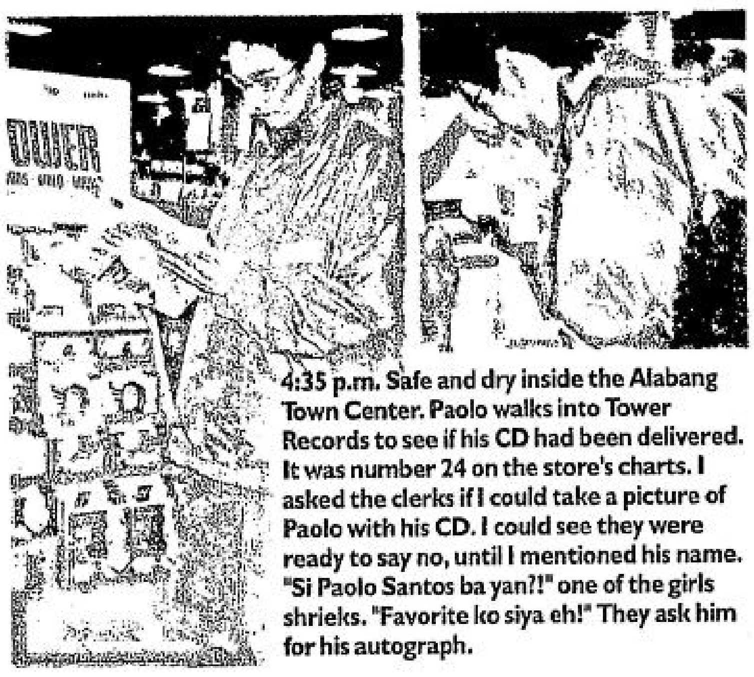
It is this ordinariness that endears him to people. It is this ordinariness that, ironically, lets him stand out.

2:00 p.m. Paolo gets ready leave the house.

3:42 p.m. Paolo begins the long drive to Alabang. He listens to Barbie's Cradle's new album. Banter was light and easy. "What's a day without music?" he asks Egay. When a plane flew overhead, he said, "Nami-miss ko na sumakay ng airplane."

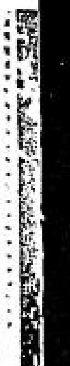


3:57 p.m. Still in the car. This time, Michael Franks was singing. Paolo looks at the dark sky outside and wishes for the rain to stop. "Ang tagal ko nang hindi nag-golf," he sighs.



4:35 p.m. Safe and dry inside the Alabang Town Center. Paolo walks into Tower Records to see if his CD had been delivered. It was number 24 on the store's charts. I asked the clerks if I could take a picture of Paolo with his CD. I could see they were ready to say no, until I mentioned his name. "Si Paolo Santos ba yan?!" one of the girls shrieks. "Favorite ko siya eh!" They ask him for his autograph.

5:10 p.m. "Kahit payat ako alam ko kung saan masarap kumain," Paolo says as he leads the way to Makati Supermarket's Coffee Shop. He orders a T-bone steak and iced tea.



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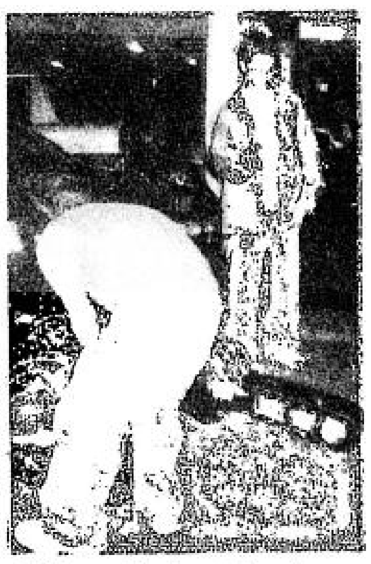
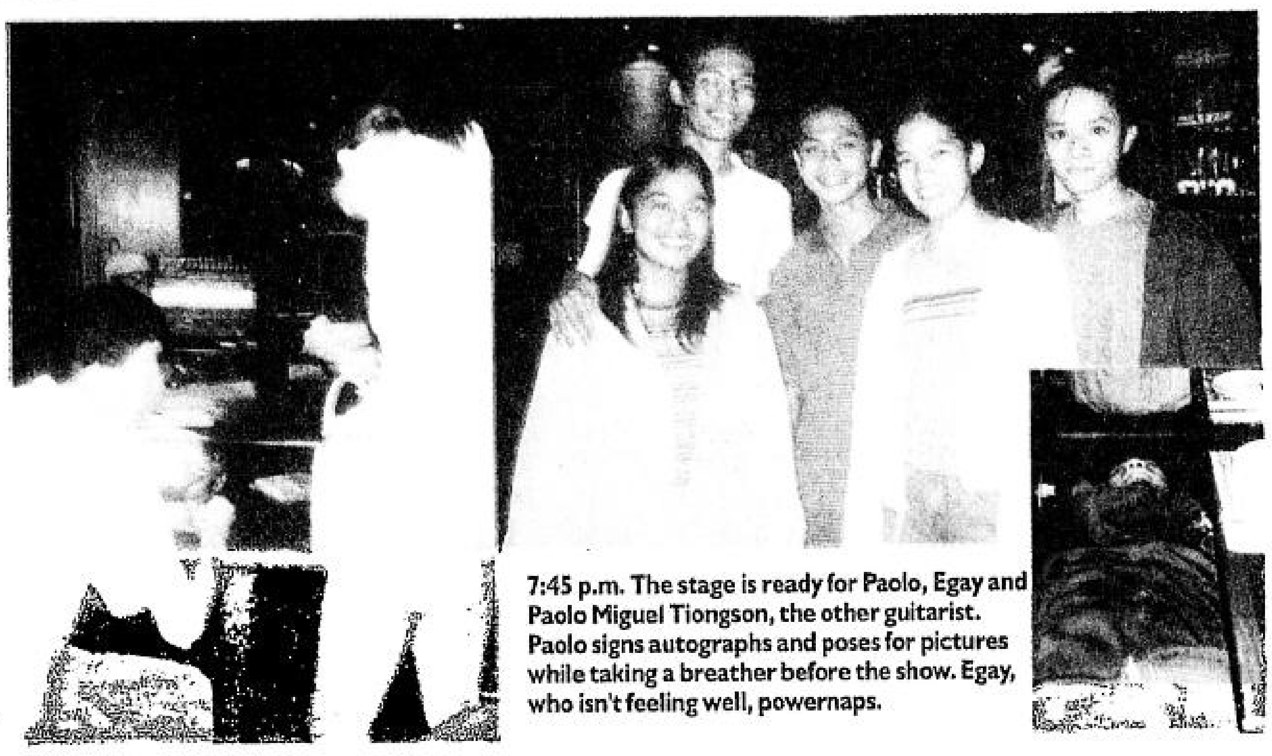


7:30 p.m. It's almost time for setup. Paolo and Egay walk back to the carpark to get their stuff. Paolo changed shirts - that was all he needed to get ready for the night's gig.

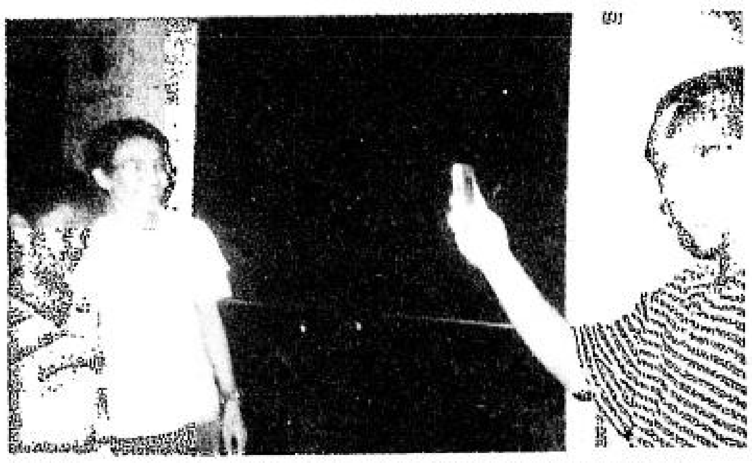


7:45 p.m. The stage is ready for Paolo, Egay and Paolo Miguel Tiongson, the other guitarist. Paolo signs autographs and poses for pictures while taking a breather before the show. Egay, who isn't feeling well, powernaps.

8:40 p.m. Paolo, Egay and Paolo get onstage and start setting up their instruments.

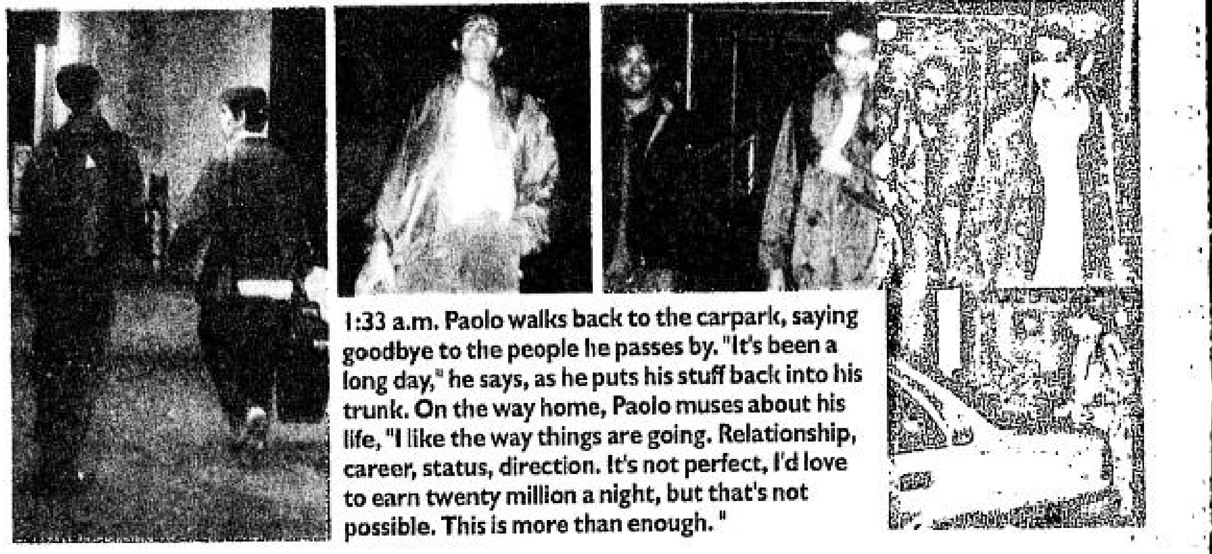
10:36 p.m. The second set starts. Paolo played his favorite song, Peter Miller's "Moonlight On Paris." He says if he has only one song that he could play, that would be his choice. Requests for different songs continue pouring in.

11:24 p.m. Paolo calls his girlfriend during the second break.



11:37 p.m. A tough-looking guy approaches Paolo. "Pare, idol ka niya," the man said, pointing to the young boy he had with him. Paolo shook the kid's hand. The kid couldn't speak. The man whips out a Nokia 3650 and takes a picture.

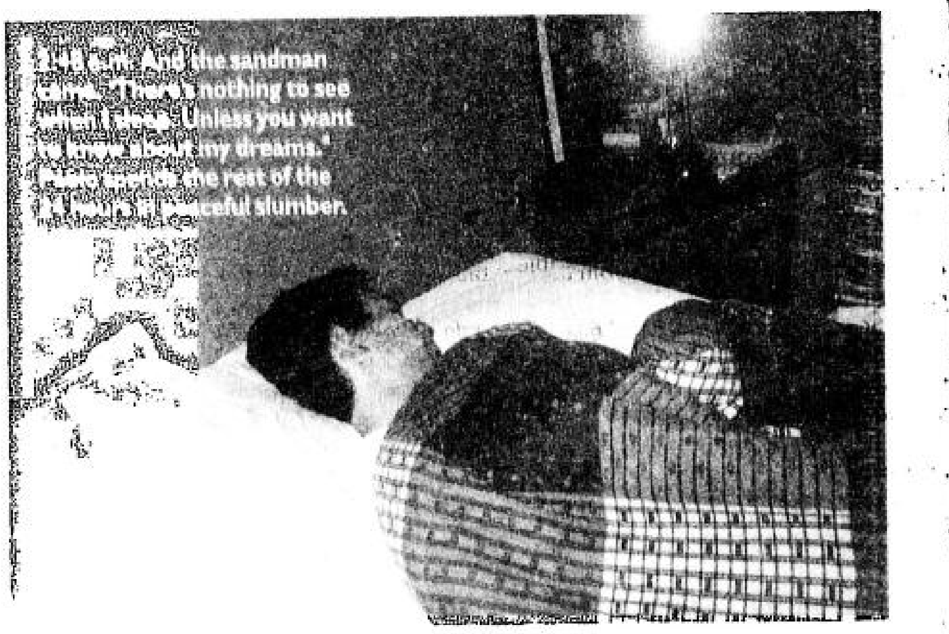
12:56 a.m. The show ends and the crowd begs for more. People keep approaching Paolo, to say hi, to ask for autographs, to pose for pictures. Though tired, Paolo remains pleasant and friendly. "I don't quite believe in the word fan. 'Di ko magamit. It's awkward to use. I call them "people who watch me" or "people who follow my gigs." I appreciate these people. Hindi ako ganun eh. Sobra akong bilib sa'yo, di ko masasabi. Mahihya ako." He recalls the time he had to ask someone else to ask for Grace Nono's autograph for him.



1:33 a.m. Paolo walks back to the carpark, saying goodbye to the people he passes by. "It's been a long day," he says, as he puts his stuff back into his trunk. On the way home, Paolo muses about his life, "I like the way things are going. Relationship, career, status, direction. It's not perfect, I'd love to earn twenty million a night, but that's not possible. This is more than enough. "

2:02 a.m. Paolo arrives home. He sets down his guitar case on the dining room floor and goes up to his room.

2:07 a.m. Paolo is back in his comfort zone. He takes his shoes off and relaxes.



[illegible] And the sandman came. "There's nothing to see when I sleep. Unless you want to know about my dreams." [illegible] the rest of the 24 hours in peaceful slumber.

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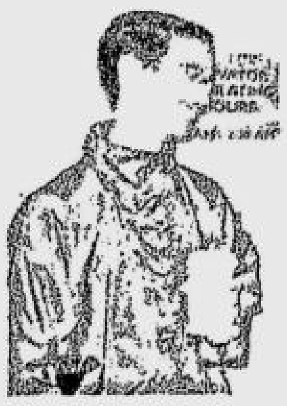
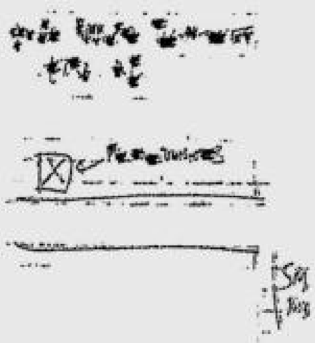
2:03 p.m. Car trouble. One of the lights in his car died the previous night and Paolo plans on getting it fixed. But he will be saying goodbye to car troubles in the near future. "Hopefully I'll be getting a new car soon, after three years of killing myself," he says, grinning at the prospect of new wheels.

2:20 p.m. Paolo pulls into the garage of his trusty car electricians. "It's really cheap here." While waiting for the men to fix the fuse, he talks about his impending big purchase. No luxury car for this guy, though. "I want the new Honda City. I was never a car guy. I make sure my car is well maintained but I wouldn't spend hundreds of thousands to make a car look good. I don't even have time to make myself look good."





3:20 p.m. Paolo goes to Starbucks in Podium to pick up Egay Caole, his percussionist. The barista in Starbucks seemed starstruck. She stared and grinned at Paolo the entire time, prompting him to say, "Isang caramel macchiato at isang smile." Ms. Barista found Paolo's presence so disarming that she failed to ask our names. All three drinks were labeled "Paolo."

Things you didn't know about Paolo:

He lived in Europe for a year and a half and was in Switzerland trying to get a master's degree.

His dream destination is the South of France.

He's been an insomniac since 1998.

He likes comics (X-Men), going to Time Zone and watching the French and Spanish channel.

He cried when he watched James Taylor's concert in Manila when he was in high school.

The only thing he misses about the corporate world is overtime pay.

If he wins the lottery, he says the first thing he'd buy would be a James Olson guitar from Minnesota, which takes two years to build and costs 8,000 to 11,000 dollars. The second thing he'd do is to throw a party for everyone he knows. *"Papakainin ko at papainumin lahat."*

He used to get paid P800 for 30 songs.

He has five to seven gigs a week.

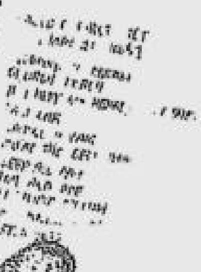
50 p.m. Paolo explores Alabang Town Center and expresses sappointment that it takes a very short time for him to be able to e the entire place. He's a self-proclaimed mallrat. "Pag walang g, I usually walk around the mall and end up buying something I n't need. Matiyaga ako sa shopping. People usually ask me where go to buy different things."

6:32 p.m. He checks out golf clubs. Golf has been an addiction for Paolo these past months. "Pag walang ginagawa, punta lang akong Villamor para maglaro." The salesman at the shop approaches Paolo. "Sir, napanood ko po kayo sa TV." Paolo greets him warmly. They spend the next few minutes chatting about golf clubs.

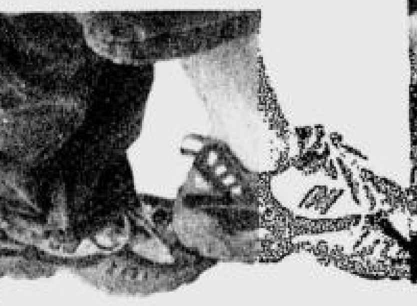
6:45 p.m. Paolo's hungry again. He goes to Almon Marina and orders a turkey breast sandwich.

6:55 p.m. When the sandwich arrives, he gingerly takes out the cucumber."Ito ang pinakaayaw kong vegetable. Panira," he says with all seriousness.

9:04 p.m. The first set begins with Sleeping To Dream, much to the delight of the crowd who braved the bad weather to watch him play.



10:07 p.m. Paolo sits back and takes his first break.



12:01 a.m. The third set starts. Paolo plays two originals - "Play With Me" and "Mapansin." The crowd asks for more.

Paolo-isms:

On fashion: *"Basta di ka ang magmukhang tanga. Yun yung* point. That's fashion for me."

On being flexible: "I still maintain a set of principles but I have compromised some of them. The goal is to keep on playing."

On his energy onstage: *"Ang kapal ng mukha ko sa* stage, *ibang-iba."*

On his status: "I wouldn't exchange it for anything right now. Call me a hypocrite *pero hindi talaga. Iba eh. Iba."*

On success and popularity: *"Hindi ako nagbago. Mahilig ako kumain, mag-shopping, manood ng sine.* My friends keep me grounded."

"You're measured with how you work, how committed you are, how big your heart is."

"I don't know how to handle success."

On his success: "I never expected it to be this big."

"Sobrang daming mas magaling mag-gitara, sobrang daming mas magaling kumanta, sobrang daming mas gwapo, sobrang daming mas mataba so bakit bumebenta? I think it's because they see that an average person can do it. It can inspire people."

On remaining independent: "Do what you beleive in."

"I'm trying to prove to everyone that I can still hold your own and get your share of the market."

On being forced to sing "Happy": *"Baka magpakamatay ako."*

On facing adversities: "The last thing I want in my life is drama."

On leaving the corporate jungle: "I always pray to say thank you that this is my job. I'm not stuck in some office trying to kiss a** to get a promotion."

On people downloading his MP3s: *"Okay lang, wag niyo lang ibenta."*

On being shy: "Some people would think I'm *isnabero*. I'm just a shy guy. I'm not the type who could go from table to table. *Ang hirap kaya nun, magpapa-cute ka araw-araw."*

On not sticking to one genre: *"Basta maganda yung kanta tutugtugin ko."*

On choosing songs: "The only time it feels like work is when people try to force me to sing a song I don't like. *Matigas ulo ko. Di mo ako mapapakanta ng ayaw ko."*

On not caring too much about what other people think: "You cannot please everyone. Keep trying to please everyone and you'd die really early."

On passion vs. fame: *"Tumutugtog ka dahil kailangan ng katawan mo, hindi ka tumutugtog para maging* superstar."

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HEADING FOR THE TOP: Patty in black and white shirt with raw-edge detail, lace camisole and grey denim with a lime necktie worn as belt.

LAYERING'S his thing: Johan in five-button orange over pink jersey worn with floral pants and limited edition Reeboks, matched with no less than three belts.

Have mike, will travel

Text and styling by Tim Yap
Photos by Neil Lucente and Claudine Sia
Make up by Xeng Zulueta for Shu Uemura
All clothes and accessories by Paul Smith

SO EVERYONE wants to be a VJ? Rock 'n roll, all that glib talking and glam—the spotlight, or shall I say the chroma, is on you, and you have to make sure that while you're on, the couch potato doesn't switch stations. Big job, but someone's gotta do it.

All eyes are on Johan Ekedum and Patty Laurel as they walk towards the Paul Smith store in Shangri-la Plaza mall.

Earlier, as Johan walked from Megamall towards the shoot, three random people approached him. "Hey VJ!" they would greet him as his big hair bounced in the air. Patty, on the other hand, with her petite frame and feminine demeanor exudes pretty young thang.

While fitting Paul Smith's latest collection of disco stars and dainty dresses, Johan and Patty exuded a kind of sibling-like rapport—praising each other sincerely and laughing at one another as Shu Uemura's Xeng Zulueta dabbed on makeup and attached false eyelashes on Patty.

"We wanted someone we can mold, and Patty fits the bill," I remember one of the judges say during the VJ hunt event. Right in front of the camera, Patty was transformed from naughty school girl to funky pop star and back.

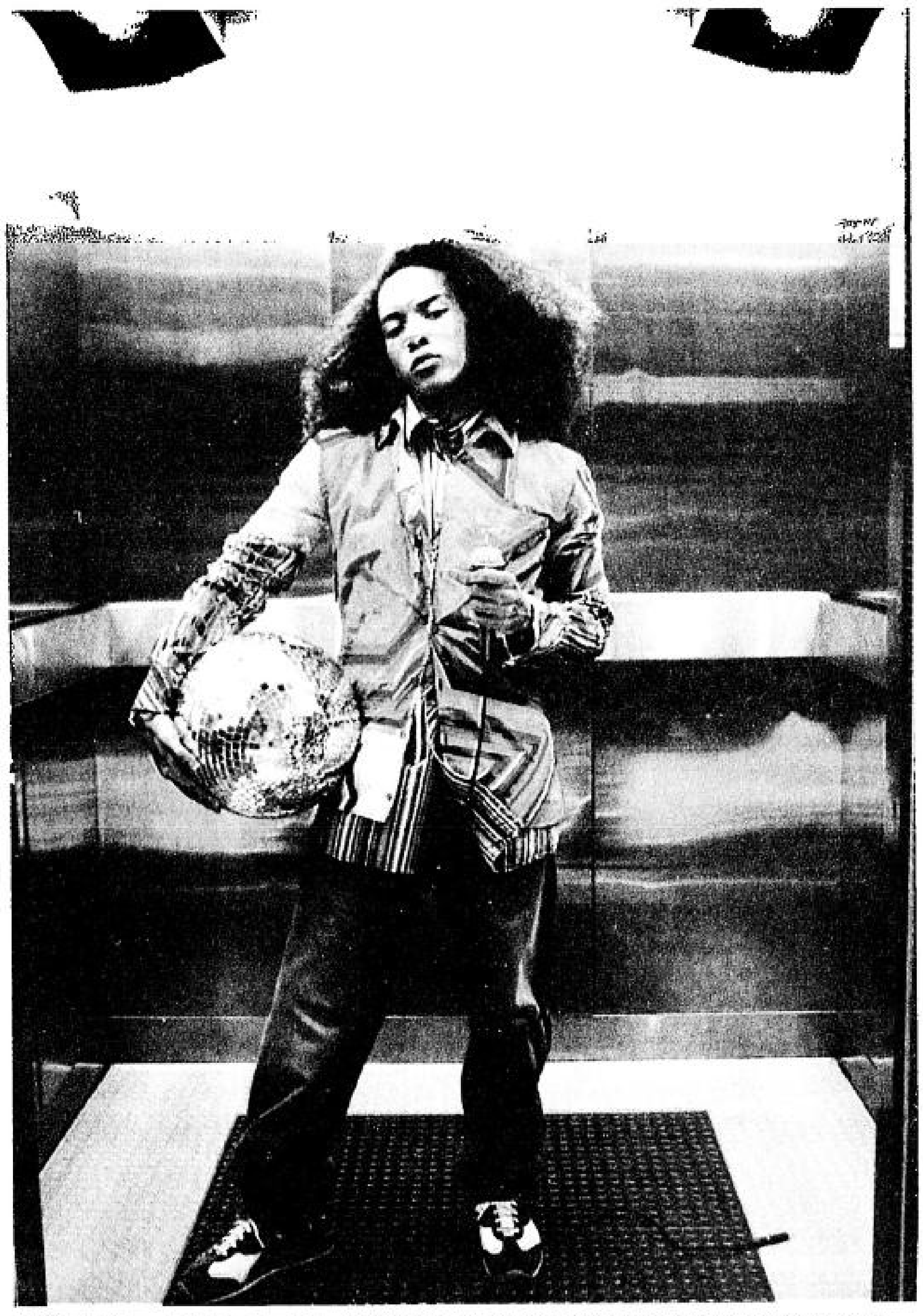
Johan, with or without his hair, explodes like wildfire when you least expect it. He has this vibrant quality that attracts people and makes them wonder, "What's beneath all that hair?"

As an impromptu thing, we hop around the Paul Smith store and all over the mall as Neil Lucente and Claudine Sia capture Johan and Patty in all their quirky glory.

Pretty soon, they'll be lording it over the MTV screens as they try their quirkiest best to win us over with their gift of gab. And with a three month contract to prove their worth, we'll see if Johan and Patty will make viewers shriek "I like!"

HAVE MIKE/ E7

ALL tied-up: Patty in crisp-white cotton shirt with polka dot tie paired with 'eat chocolate' skirt toting striped Paul Smith signature bag.



ATTITUDE much: Johan in stripe shirt worn under star-print top, faded hip-hop jeans and yellow and blue limited edition Reeboks.

PATTY belts it out with a whale canvas belt as a neck piece, an off-white denim jacket with zipper detail and camisole.

JOHAN goes airborne in khaki-striped parallel pants, yellow-striped pajama-style top, floral tie and those Reeboks again!

Have Mike, will t

From page E0

Tim Yap: Where are you from? Where do you live?

Patty Laurel: I originally hail from down South, the beautiful land of toll ways and EPASSes. Back then, my daily route was Home-La Salle Zobel-Alabang Town Center-Home! However, I recently relocated to the heart of Metro Manila...Makati City! And I'm loving it here!

TY: Current Occupation

PL: Ateneo College Student slash UAAP courtside reporter turned MTV VJ.

TY: Current Preoccupation?

PL: Traveler, Frustrated Artist, Bargain Hunter, Everybody Loves Raymond Fanatic, Pre-School Teacher

TY: High point in life so far?

PL: Being a part of the MTV VJ hunt and actually winning it! I learned so much through my encounters with all the genuinely beautiful and kind-hearted people of MTV - both the staff and the finalists. I know that I got this through my hard work and my complete surrender to the will of God. I basically started from scratch, I hardly had any exposure and I knew no one in the entertainment industry. I was just a clueless college girl who just really wanted to become a VJ for MTV! Thanks to the non-stop encouragement I received from my family and my close buddies, not only did I survive the hunt, I even won!

TY: What is your idea of a good time?

PL: Enjoying the simple things in life with the people you love the most. The best place on earth is my Lolo's beach in Davao where we all enjoy a rugged Kamayan-style eating by the sea followed by a soothing siesta on a hammock.

TY: In the movie of your life, who'd play you? what would the theme song be?

PL: I would definitely ask my favorite, Guiseppe Tornatore to direct a heart-warming movie based on my life, and if I'm lucky enough I'd ask Monica Belucci to play my part! The theme song would have to be "So Young" by The Corrs.

TY: Define your generation in your eyes.

PL: I bring sweet chaos to the lives of my loved ones. Because they can't live with me and they can't live without me! Hahaha!

TY: What's the best thing about you being born?

PL: The Filipino youth is quick to decipher authenticity from a mere façade. He possesses a zest for life yet practices cautious optimism.

Afro-dude

Tim Yap: Where are you from? Where do you live?

Johan Ekedum: You might not believe this, but I'm actually a product of Immaculate Conception. Haha! Kidding. Hope that doesn't get misconstrued as blasphemy. Seriously though, my folks are mutts! My mom's basically Filipina with the usual Spanish ancestry, which explains why I got all this body hair coz my dad's pretty smooth. My dad's Nigerian with some Egyptian thrown in. Got the big hair from him . . . wish I got his height too . . . oh, and I live at my lolo's place in QC.

TY: Current occupation?

JE: VJ!!!! Yeah!!!! But I'm still studying though. Be back in UP by June.

TY: Current preoccupation?

JE: Preoccupations would be more like it, coz I got a lot! I'm pretty neurotic. I'm preoccupied with health, sex, birth and death, morality and mortality issues and my relationship with God and the rest of the world. I'm currently visiting a place I've been in when I was still 17 . . . a sorta screwed up place with all the teenage angst. Ask me again in a couple of years . . . or 7.

TY: High point in life so far?

JE: Winning the vj hunt! But before that, when I passed UPCAT as an ECE major. That was a pretty ecstatic time for me. The usual stuff . . . first crush, first kiss, first love crap.

TY: What's your idea of a good time?

JE: Depends on my mood, actually. I love to just lounge around, watch a movie, just listen to my records and chill out or sing along and pretend I'm in a concert. If I go clubbing though, it's probably coz I'd wanna go dancing. Nothing beats the feeling of losing yourself to the music as the world spins around you . . . like you're surrendering yourself to something GREAT! A feeling I also get on the rare times I'd postpone something I really want to do or get because I have to help someone out or get someone something . . . know what I mean? I think that's the Mother Teresa in me.

TY: In the movie of ur life, who'd play you? What would be the theme song?

JE:50 Cent guy has a nice body, so maybe I'll get him. Or maybe Justin Timberlake, make him dark and grow his fro back. He's got dope dance moves!!! Gary Dourdan's cool, but he might be too serious and too studly to accurately portray me . . . unless he can act well, which I doubt . . .

Songs!!! Man! This, I love, so I have 5! "Eternal Life" by Jeff Buckley. All the elements in the song, from the words to the music to how it was sung, appeal to me. If I were a song, this would be me. "King of Sorrow," by Sade. If they're gonna make my life seem tragic. "Dance Tonight" by Lucy Pearl. If they're gonna make a feel good movie. "Immigrant" by Nitin Sawnhey. If it's a romantic movie. I'd want Christina Ricci or Thora Birch to play the fictional girl in my life coz I really got none. "Long Gone Day" by Mad Season . . . I just love this song.

TY: Define your generation in your eyes.

JE: Seems like our generation is . . . experiential? Is there such a word? Anyway, all I wanna say is that it seems to me like it's not enough for us to just see or read about things, we have to experience it. . . well, at least that's how it is for me. I find it hard to analyze something I'm part of, so i gave an answer based on how i feel.

TY: What's d best thing about you being born?

JE: This one is begging for a beauty pageant answer! The best thing about me being born is, i believe, that i am born to love . . . We are born to love. Let's always remember that.

ALL HUNG UP: (L-R) Floral eyelet shirt and Rose Print Jacket. On Johan: Metal Aviator shades, blue striped pants topped with T-shirt and red short sleeved top.

I'm always fresh, always clean, hindi bitin.

Lactoserum
Lactic acid
LACTACYD

Other feminine washes can leave you feeling 'bitin'. You might not feel fresh anymore after a few hours... like you just used soap. But with Lactacyd, you'll feel fresh longer. Lactacyd has lactoserum and lactic acid, natural ingredients that protect you from itching and odor longer than other feminine washes. That's the kind of protection you can trust, and the kind of protection you deserve.

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Consult your doctor if symptoms persist.

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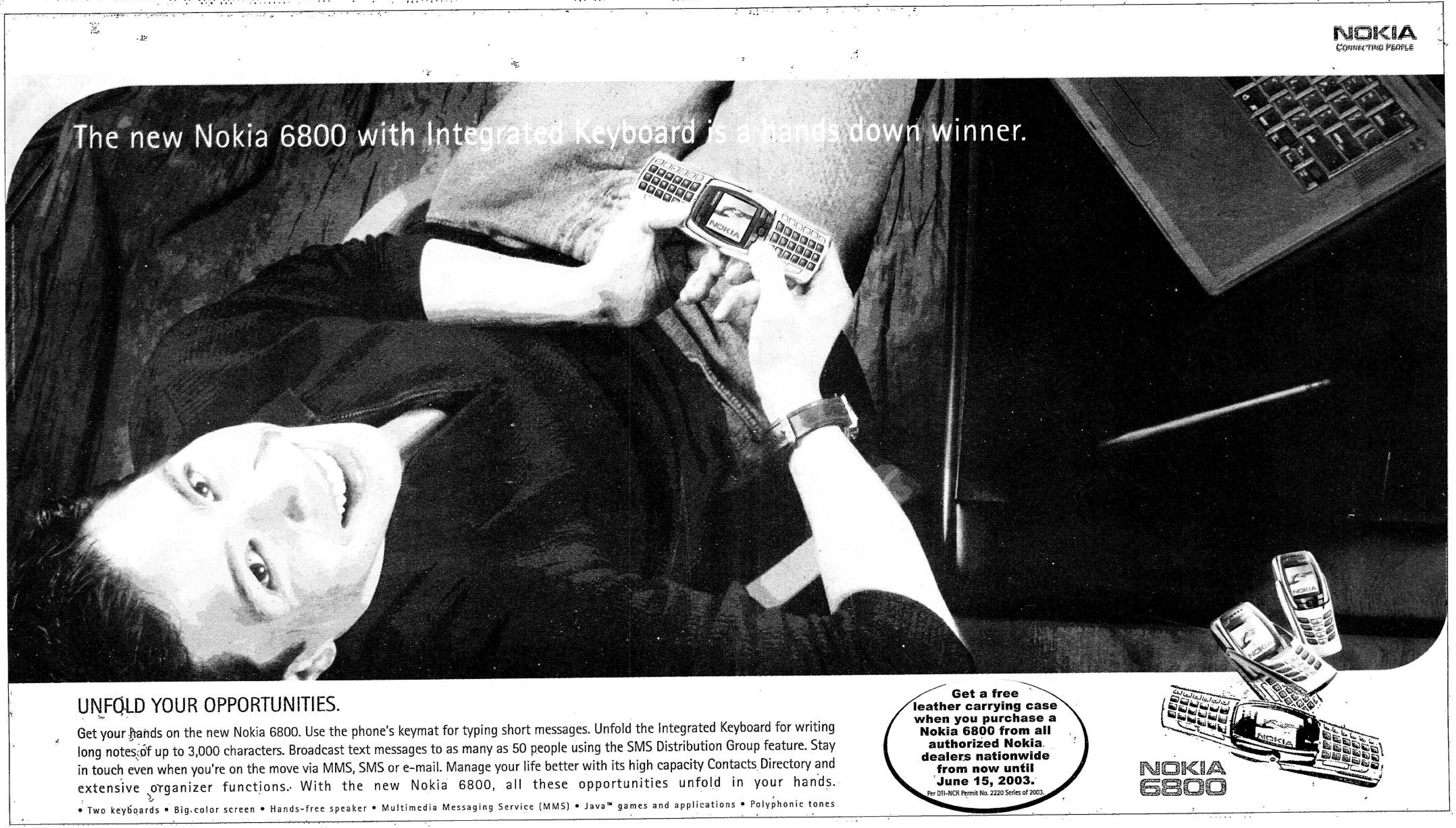

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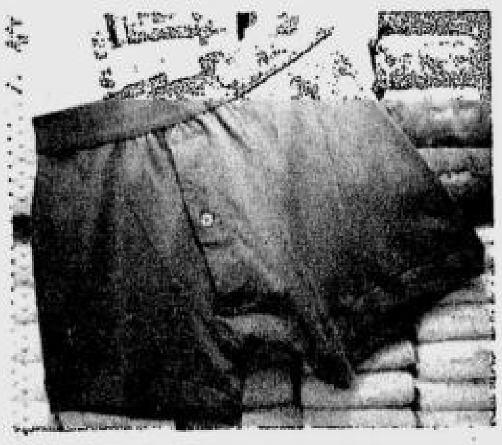


BENCHBODY army green men's boxer shorts P239.00.

MARITHE Francois Girbaud balloon skirt P11,400.00

Wardrobe Update

Chechel Joson

HERE are a few suggestions to solve your fashion dilemma. If you feel that you have nothing to wear, you don't have to get a new wardrobe, just get the key pieces to spice up what you already have.

From cute comfy army green men's boxers that look sexy on women too and a fabulous and versatile balloon skirt that you could wear with your baby tees to cool colored sneakers and a classy umbrella, you better get ready to go shopping!

FOLDED and Hung capri pants P999.00

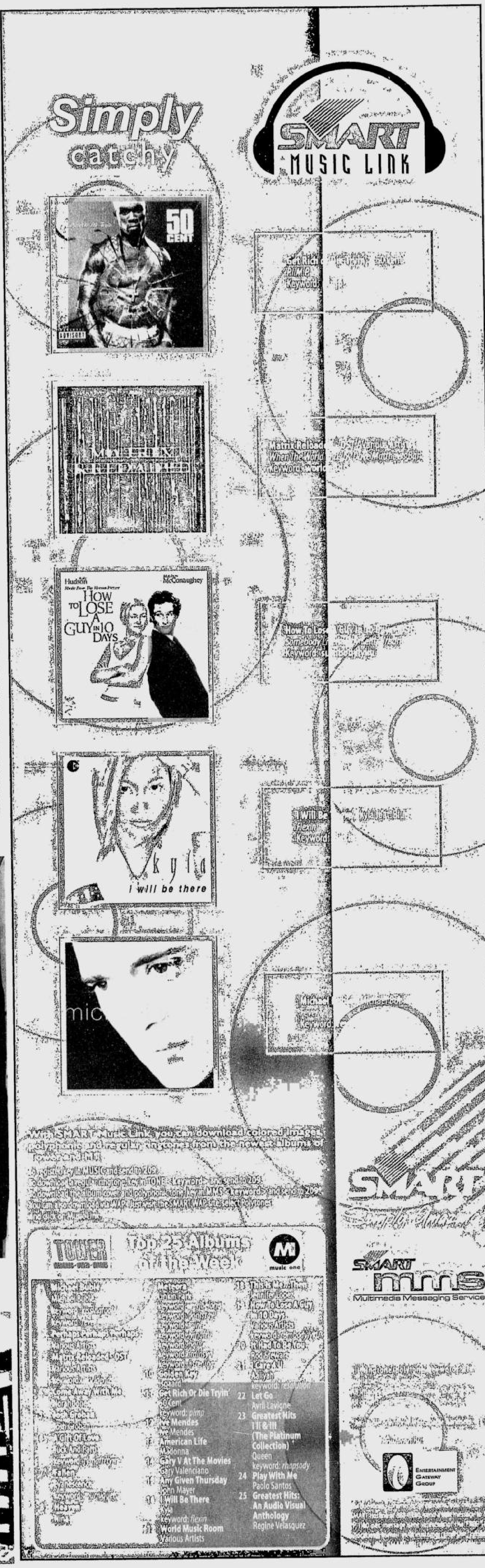
PEOPLE are people army green cargo pants P999.00, People are people beige hooded jacket P639.00

PAUL Smith sneakers by Reebok P9,250

MARITHE Francois Girbaud Men's gray utility pants P8,200.00

BENCH track jacket P 698.00, Bench visor P149.00

PAUL Smith umbrella P 10,000



Simply catchy

SMART MUSIC LINK

Top 25 Albums of the Week

Tower Records · Video · Books

music one

10 Golden Key
Lugaro
11 Get Rich Or Die Tryin'
50 Cent
keyword: pimp
12 ve Mendes
ve Mendes
13 American Life
Madonna
14 Gary V At The Movies
Gary Valenciano
15 Any Given Thursday
John Mayer
16 I Will Be There
Kyla
keyword: flexin
17 World Music Room
Various Artists

keyword: resolution
22 Let Go
Avril Lavigne
23 Greatest Hits I II & III (The Platinum Collection)
Queen
keyword: rhapsody
24 Play With Me
Paolo Santos
25 Greatest Hits: An Audio Visual Anthology
Regine Velasquez

SMART Simply Natural

SMART mms Multimedia Messaging Service

Entertainment Gateway Group

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Germs deadlier than SARS!

SWAK

I GREW UP watching "That's Entertainment" every single day. Kuya Germs was truly ahead of his time. If you look at who the stars today are, a whole bunch them were trained under the watchful eye of German Moreno. Two of them stand out as Pinoys who have made it big in the international arena. Of course, there is the grand dame of international theater, Lea Salonga. Not quite in the same genre, but an unquestionable star none the less, is Billy Crawford, or The Artist Formerly Known as Billy Joe.

Hot pink barong

What is it with those colored *barongs* and suits that draws a crowd??? Mike Velarde seems to be conforming to the Kuya Germs formula: The hotter the pink in your suit, the hotter the ratings. The creators of Stabilo would certainly be proud! I am continuously amazed by the outfits worn by the man behind "That's Entertainment" and now "Master Showman." I know that other '80s enthusiasts will agree that Ate Luds and Ike Lozada paled in comparison to Kuya Germs. I mean who would allow themselves to be called Germs anyway. He was more than just a germ though, he was a virus, more deadly than SARS because it lasted for decades. He instilled in many young minds the virus of creativity, which consumed its host entirely.

Hilarious

I remember that Kuya Germs would let each group perform their acting skits one by one. The Lotlots and Cristina Paners would let their hair down, giving it their all. Young starlets would act out roles from love triangles of days gone by, complete with a *sampalan* scene at the end. Imagine some 14-year-old novice actress acting out the immortal lines of the *contrabida* queen Cherie Gil, "You are nothing but a trying hard, second-rate, copycat!" It was hilarious!

For those who never had the pleasure of watching an episode of "That's Entertainment," a.k.a "That's" to us regulars, each day was known as the Monday group, Tuesday group and so on. The rivalries flourished and the love teams were cemented. All while the fans lapped it up—every last drop. Somehow the Germs of old, though, is not who he used to be. "Master Showman" has been relegated to a time slot in the wee hours of the morning, and the sets, lighting and dance choreography seem to be the same as the ones used on "That's" 20 years ago. To use a totally unrelated analogy from a different world: Jordan should have quit while he was on top. Nevertheless, I still recognize that the man in the bright orange suit was a visionary who has left a lasting mark in the Filipino psyche.

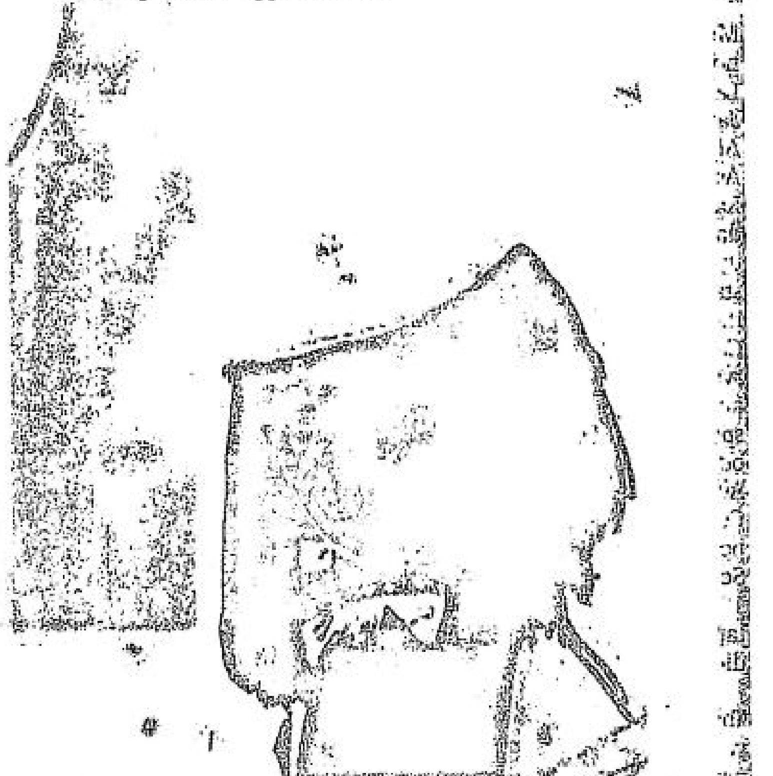
Against the grain

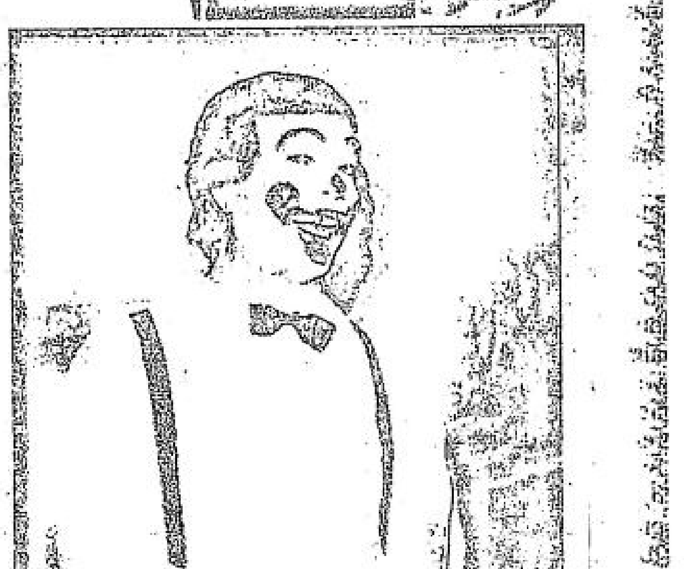
All the people from the many Star Circle batches have only Kuya Germs and his "That's Entertainment" brood to thank for their stardom. In the '80s these young kids lay the groundwork for today's superstars. When I watched "Moulin Rouge" I remembered Kuya Germs in the character played by Satine's handler. I watched this international blockbuster and thought to myself, I've seen this all before.

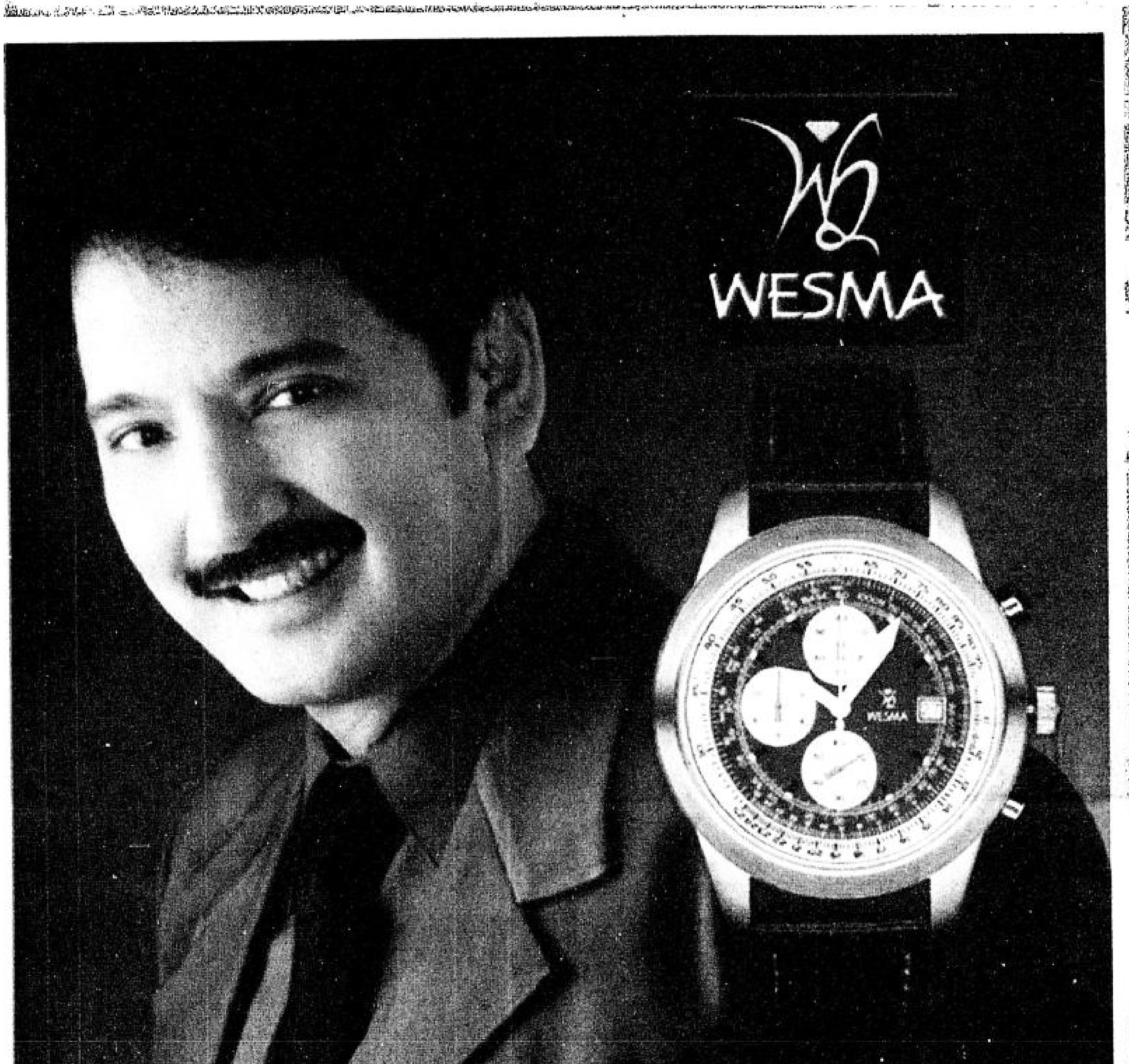
As a nation we grew up putting young people down. In school, students are taught to never speak up against their teachers and simply memorize and regurgitate information. At home, children are expected to suck it up when they are scolded and never have an opinion in opposition to their parents. The working world continues the pattern as bosses power trip on their employees and expect their subordinates to be mindless sheep. Kuya Germs went against the grain and stuck his neck out to give young people a chance. He mentored budding stars and starlets until they were ready for bigger things. Like Germs, if people in a position of power and authority use their elevated position to inspire and give opportunities to those who look up to them, our world would be a much better place.

Pied Piper

I think the tenets that brought Kuya Germs success were very simple: Inspire others to pursue their passions. Nurture the dreams of the youth. Find the talent in every young person by looking beneath what is apparent on the surface. He is the Pied Piper whose energy rubbed off on everyone around him. He was and will always be the one and only Master Showman.







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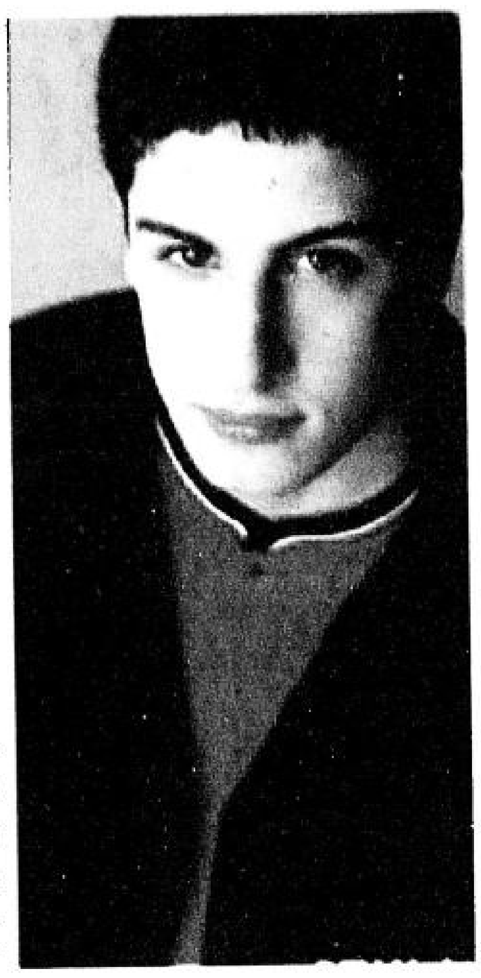
Super-studded MTV movie awards 2003

Will Smith, Martin Lawrence, Hugh Jackman, Famke Janssen, Claire Danes, Jason Biggs, Alyson Hannigan, Owen Wilson, Ashton Kutcher, Mark Wahlberg, Kate Hudson, Luke Wilson, Amanda Bynes, Britanny Murphy, P. Diddy and Hilary Duff join the star-studded list of presenters at the 2003 MTV Movie Awards . . . and Super! will be there to cover it


JASON Biggs gets his pie

MUSIC Television today announced that Will Smith, Martin Lawrence, Hugh Jackman, Famke Janssen, Claire Danes, Jason Biggs, Alyson Hannigan, Owen Wilson, Ashton Kutcher, Mark Wahlberg, Kate Hudson, Luke Wilson, Amanda Bynes, Brittany Murphy, P. Diddy and Hilary Duff will join the star-studded list of presenters at the 2003 MTV Movie Awards. Cameron Diaz, Lucy Liu, Drew Barrymore, Will Ferrell, Wanda Sykes, and Vince Vaughn will be making special appearances in the film parodies for which the MTV Movie Awards are known. In addition, 50 Cent, t.A.T.u., and Pink are set to perform. Hosted by Seann William Scott and Justin Timberlake, the 12th annual awards show will be taped on May 31 at the Shrine Auditorium in Los Angeles.

"The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers" and "Spider Man" top this year's nominee list with five nominations each. In addition to the usual lineup of nomination categories, MTV has added a new category "Best Virtual Performance," saluting the latest tool of movie making: artificial character generation.

50 Cent, a protégé of Eminem and Dr. Dre, debuted on the scene earlier this year. His first commercial release, "Get Rich or Die Tryin'," was the highest-selling debut album of all time with sales of almost 900,000 copies in the first week alone, and five million since its release in February. His latest release, "50 Cent: The New Breed," a combination CD/DVD, debuted at No. 1 on April 15. Both projects remain on the Billboard Top 10 with "Get Rich or Die Tryin'" currently back at No. 1.

t.A.T.u., the biggest-selling Russian act, topped the UK charts in February 2002 with their debut single, "All The Things She Said," which won MTV Russia's Video of the Year Award in 2001. Their debut album, "200 KM/H In The Wrong Lane" sold over one million copies in Russia and peaked at No. 13 on the Billboard 200 chart.

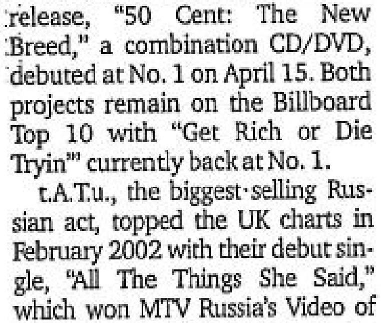
Currently in the studio working on a new album due in November, Pink will debut on television her summer song "Feel Good Time," the lead single from the upcoming "Charlie's Angels: Full Throttle" movie soundtrack (June 24th release). Her Grammy-nominated sophomore album "Missundaztood" went multi-platinum.

Last year, the 2002 MTV Movie Awards was the most watched in the show's 11-year history, averaging over seven million viewers. Also, the 2002 MTV Movie Awards on MTV.com recorded its highest usage and voting numbers in Movie Awards history. Unique visitors to the Movie Awards site were up 36 percent from last year and up 55 percent from 2000.

The 2003 MTV Movie Awards will be seen in 166 countries/territories via 84 channels, and in 17 languages in over 380 million households.

Joel Gallen of Tenth Planet Productions will serve as executive producer with Salli Frattini serving as executive producer for MTV. The director is Louis J. Horvitz and Mich~~ael Demp~~sey will serve as the co-producer.

The 2003 MTV Movie Awards will premiere on June 14 at ? p.m. with a repeat on June 15 at 9 p.m.

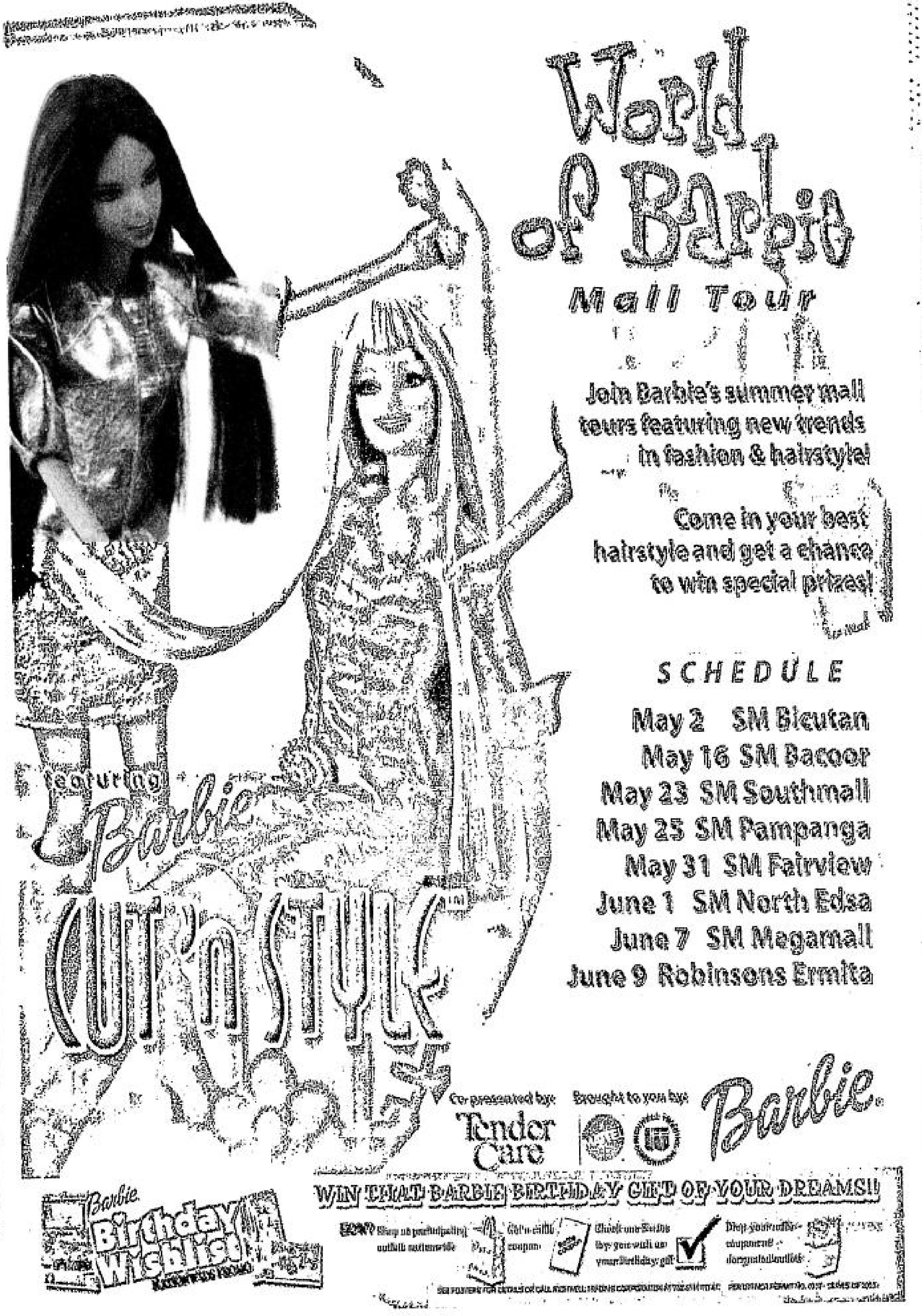

AMANDA Bynes goes Brit pop

WOLF whistles for Hugh Jackman

DISNEY-FIED Hilary Duff

ASHTON Kutcher, where's my car?

KATE Hudson, now famous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May 2 SM Bicutan
May 16 SM Bacoor
May 23 SM Southmall
May 25 SM Pampanga
May 31 SM Fairview
June 1 SM North Edsa
June 7 SM Megamall
June 9 Robinsons Ermita

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Jolly Shakes
Mango
Strawberry
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Refresh yourself with cool and creamy Jolly Shakes! Available in mango, chocolate and strawberry flavors!

Jollibee

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The Evolution

MR. KNOW-IT-ALL

Caloy Garchitorena

IT is possible that some people will read Super and see it as birth...a first...the maiden flight of a new demographic, a new guide to something good in life...the good life, where the gems of our culture and passion for partying will be plucked from the heap of soot-caked coal. Super is, after all, the fruit of the labors of the most colorful in the bunch, Tim Yap, undoubtedly a visionary. I'm not sure what his vision is, but I can guess...hmmm...to put the Philippines on the dancefloors, the maps, and the menus of the world? Too *babaw*. To seek out new interesting hangouts, new perspectives, and new sub-cultures that DON'T start with "E"? To boldly do what no eventologist has done before?

Nay, my misguided self, none can answer that but the Yaparazzi himself, for I am but a humble know-it-all who lurks in the shadows on the darkest of nights out. I am not fit to plug one end of his digital camera charger in the wall.

But, like Tim, I too wrote for the masses. The public servants that we were, while he printed pictures of parties in Singapore for the unfortunate who could not make it—stealing shots of Robbie Williams and posing with Donita at the four millionth fashion show at Wherelse—I answered letters about contracting viruses through cybersex, falling in love with a third uncle on her in-laws' side, and other mind-blowing, megamental-gymnastic situations. The tide of troubled souls...people buoyed in the crest of life, I knew I had to act quickly. I consoled the flunkies and the junkies, and I was firm with the feminists.

We will keep our eyes open, ears out for new sights and sounds, taking steps, and moving to a new beat yet to come.

The weeks went by and the letters grew more and more infrequent. I figured I was doing something right. No letter writers, no more problems.

Soon, the letters stopped coming altogether. I held a party at my house and nobody came. I breathed sigh of relief. No party, no mess. After responding to my own letters, writing stuff I wanted to talk about, I was beginning to experience discontent and disruptions from within, and after some finishing touches, I hung my printing apron, returned the p's and q's they lent me, and went home...all proverbially, of course. My job was done.

And now here I am on Super, in an INQUIRER not changed, but evolved.

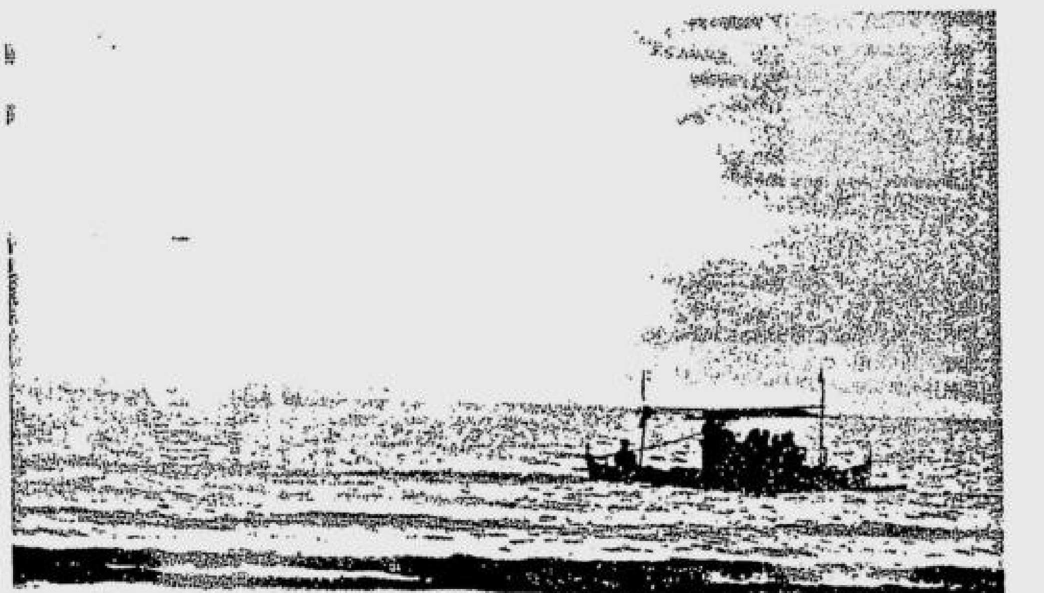
This is like Matrix Version Six. There is no painful birth, no tubes popping out our spine. Just an awakening. We will keep our eyes open, ears out for new sights and sounds, taking steps, and moving to a new beat yet to come. Super will grow as its writers will grow old writing about issues that not only satisfy your need for rude information and the latest, but feed the mind's mind, that which you don't even talk about at parties.

EPILOGUE: Since Carlos stopped writing for the Chatroom in the section 2BU!, the peso strengthened against the dollar, summer got cut short, and traffic has lightened. Reports have come in though that changed weather patterns have to date cost PhP 4 billion in infrastructure projects, and traffic is starting to suck again.

MONTEMAR: 80's Redux

By Angelique Villaraza

BANGKAS for rent



FOR those of us who work all week, the ideal weekend getaway is no more than a 3-hour drive from the city. After all, what's a vacation if we'll need another vacation just to get over the rigors of a long stressful trip?

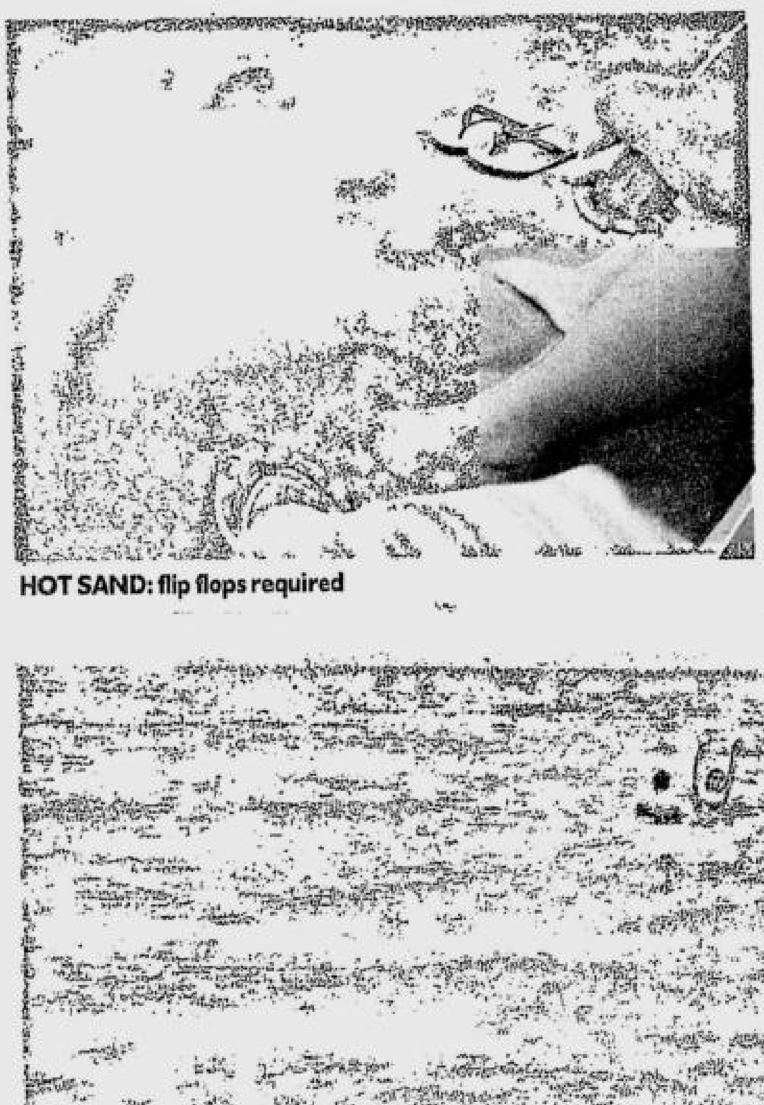
Comfort is key, but so is accessibility. Montemar Beach Club, located in Bagac, Bataan has the finest sand this side of Luzon, and most comfortable accommodations within a 3-hour drive north of Manila. It is also accessible via a two-hour ferry ride.

Spanish-style villas are available for P4,000 a night. A villa can be occupied by four people at most. The beach club has two restaurants, two swimming pools, and offers outdoor sports facilities such as table tennis, beach volleyball, and kayaking. Outdoor showers, lounge chairs, and beach umbrellas are available.

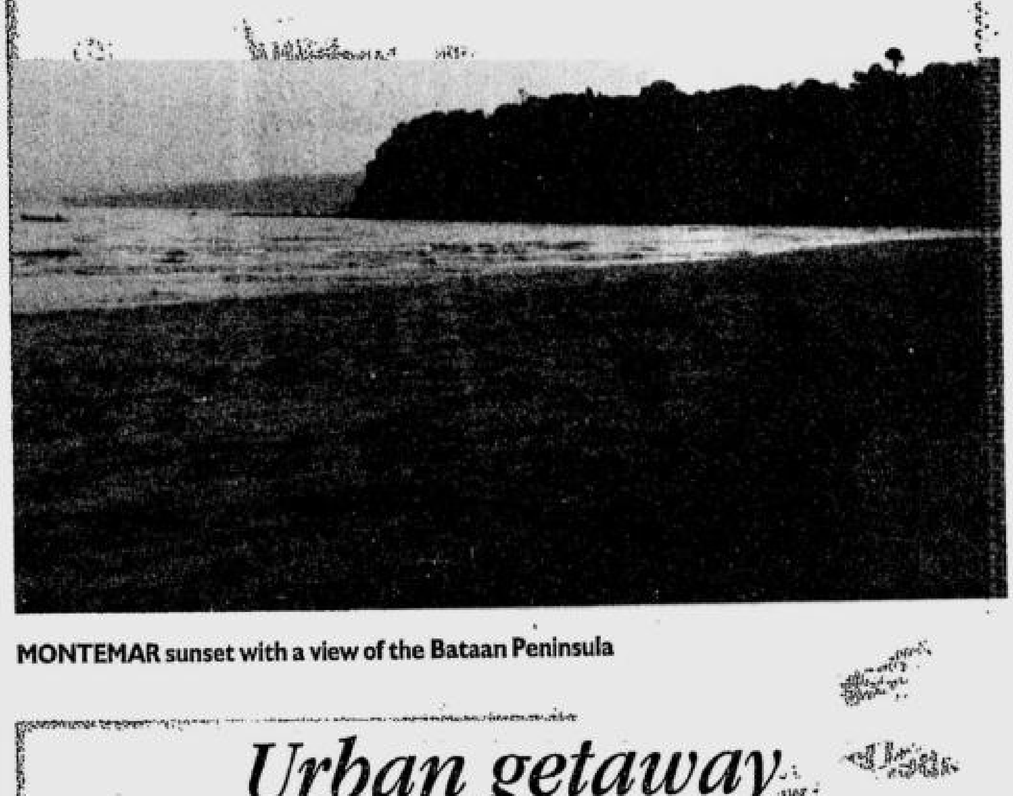
The one kilometer stretch of beach is lined with coconut trees and is well-maintained. The sand is very fine, but its grayish hue absorbs the heat making it impossible to walk barefoot on the sand for most of the day. Corals and live fish can be found on the fringes of both ends of the stretch, though most of the shorefront is free of rocks and corals. Bangkas can be rented for P800 an hour. Fishermen can take passengers to smaller, more secluded coves around Bagac Bay, such as Sun Moon Beach, or for a fishing expedition during the early morning.

In the evening, upon request, the beach club staff can set up a bonfire so that visitors can enjoy an authentic "castaway" feeling without the hassle of do-it-yourself.

Despite its proximity to the city and its pristine beach, Montemar has been able to keep its location private; hence, it is often bypassed for the more developed and more crowded beach resorts in Olongapo. This serves as an advantage for the visitor because the beach is mostly empty, so the essential solitude of a weekend getaway is preserved.



HOT SAND: flip flops required



MONTEMAR sunset with a view of the Bataan Peninsula

MONTEMAR one kilometer stretch of fine sand

Urban getaway

IS your typical weekend beginning to resemble a hamster's nocturnal run in the wheel? Do you find yourself among the throng of thousands, in a social calendar filled with sameness? Overcrowded bars, the city's cacophony, smoke-filled rooms that reach a choking density, mind numbing inane small talk . . . can sometimes be the much needed shot in the arm after a long work week. But oftentimes can be a drag, especially when combined with traffic and long queues.

We've decided to collate a series of weekend alternatives, for the urbanite that seeks an escape from the city's offerings. Don't get us wrong. Parties, clubs, fashion shows, launches and mall events can be entertaining. But there are those moments when your soul seeks solace in a completely new setting. Surprisingly . . . there are many overlooked destinations just a hop and skip away from Manila.

Loud and clear

Interviews and photos by Tim Yap

Kenji Marquez

What are you wearing?
Dockers top and silver jeans
Who are you with?
Family
Why are you here?
To see my cousin Rajo
What can't you leave home without?
Confidence
What's your current state of mind?
Just wanna get home to sleep
What's the best thing about you being born? That it was on my mother's birthday

Wendy Puyat-Hotong

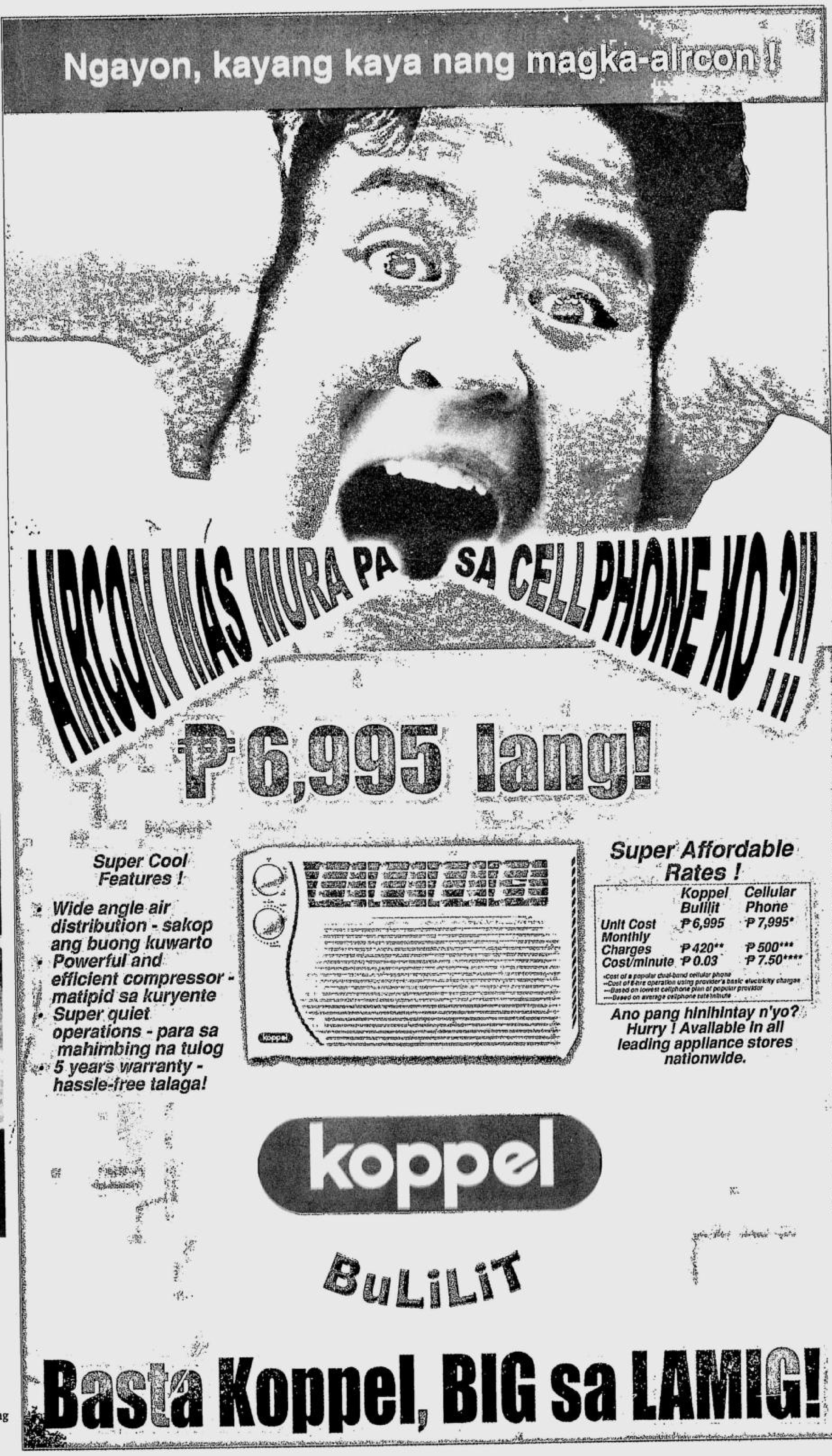
What are you wearing?
Gold bikini and mini jumpsuit
Why are you here?
To celebrate with friends
What can't you leave home without?
My bag of supplies
Who are you with?
The usual crew
What's your current state of mind?
High on life
What's the best thing about you being born?
Ask my husband Tony

Pazzy Navarro

What are you wearing?
A new sense of fighting spirit and optimism
Who are you with?
I'm constantly with my sources of inspiration, my two loves, Tonito and Chema, and my better self, always injecting the confidence to be the best I can be.
Why are you here?
My existence is greatly propelled by the intense desire to understand mtyself completely, positively securing my roles as a woman, mother, partner, daughter and friend--perform to the best of my aertistic expression and enjoy what all the world has to offer while remembering the most important consideration that is human emotion.
What can't you leave home without?
I cannot leave home withoutbeing adorned in funky feminine garb, head to toe. The look, the feel has tio be present.
What's your current state of mind?
Anxious for the best to come
What's the best thing about you being born?
I get the experience of knowing the difference between knowing what its like to simply exist, versus what its likwe to really live while extending my character beyond myself and be a positive influence and uinspiration.

Isabel Engwa

What are you wearing?
My favorite Tiger Lily jeans and tee
Why are you here?
Dinner with friends
What can't you leave home without?
Lipgloss
Who are you with?
Good friends
What's your current state of mind?
Crazy
What's the best thing about you being born?
My loved ones should answer that...



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Unit Cost	₱6,995	₱7,995*
Monthly Charges	₱420**	₱500***
Cost/minute	₱0.03	₱7.50****

*Cost of a popular dual-band cellular phone
**Cost of 8-hrs operation using provider's basic electricity charges
***Based on lowest cellphone plan of popular provider
****Based on average cellphone rate/minute

Ano pang hinihintay n'yo? Hurry ! Available in all leading appliance stores nationwide.

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BuLiLiT

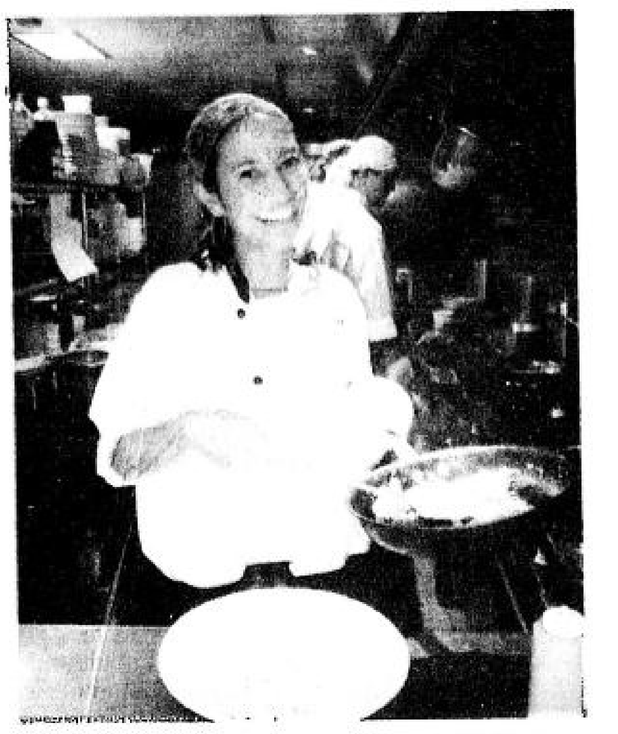
Basta Koppel, BIG sa LAMIG!

Tim Yap

'It' Girls' last-ditch effort for a tan!

FREEWAY girl G Töngi at the pool party before flying back to Los Angeles, California.

U GO GIRLS! Hindy Tantoco and Celine Lopez chill out at the Sky bar of West at Ayala



PIÈCE DE RÉSISTANCE. Stephanie Zubiri behind the kitchen at Restaurant 12. Catch her tonight!

SLIPPERY WHEN WET. Party host with the most Chut Cuerva, Arnold Martinez and Victor Consunji.

While none of our fave girls got their golden brown hues, they surely made the month much, much hotter.

WEEKEND warriors looking for the thrill pill recently went for all-out indulgence, from gastronomic grace to wet, wet, wet fantasies. The urban guerilla was up for the fight!

It must be the weather, or maybe the last few weeks before the campus calendar clicks, but the merry month of May sure has its fair share of fashionable frolic!

First up was gorgeously glam **G Töngi** behind the bar at Famous. She displayed her bartending skills, mixing one martini after another for the tantalizingly thirsty hip crowd that had gathered as Freeway launched its sizzling "Got G!" campaign.

I heard that just a week after Freeway launched its G billboards, the top that **Giselle** wore got completely sold out! And she wasn't even here at the time. Now how's that for endorse-ability?

Earlier that day, an exclusive screening was held for select members of the press. At the after-party, Giselle's famous friends came for support. **Epi Quizon, JM Rodriguez, Ira Cruz,** et al. upped the hip vibe at the dessert bar of **Joji Dingcong** and **Karen Pascual.** Freeway's fashion maven **Sheree Gotuaco** was a sight to behold in red orientalia as she mingled with the stylish set.

G was in her fashion element (and when is she not?!) as she quenched everyone's desires by simply pouring it out and pouting seductively while doing it. Attagirl.

Penthouse pah-tee

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Gastronomic grace

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Much later, more hipsters filled the white hot halls of 12 to join in the fun—Steph's I.S. buddies, from **KC Concepcion** and **Alex Escat** to glitz biz figures **Troy Montero, G** and **JM,** and young society types.

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FAMOUS FILES. Epi Quizon and G Töngi behind the bar at the after-party of her Freeway launch

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FLORAL FROLIC. Victoria London in all her booty glory

MAY MADNESS. Joel Tantoco savors the last few days of summer

SHU-IN. Tina Tinio and Joji Dingcong

FRESH FETE. Alex Escat seen at 12.

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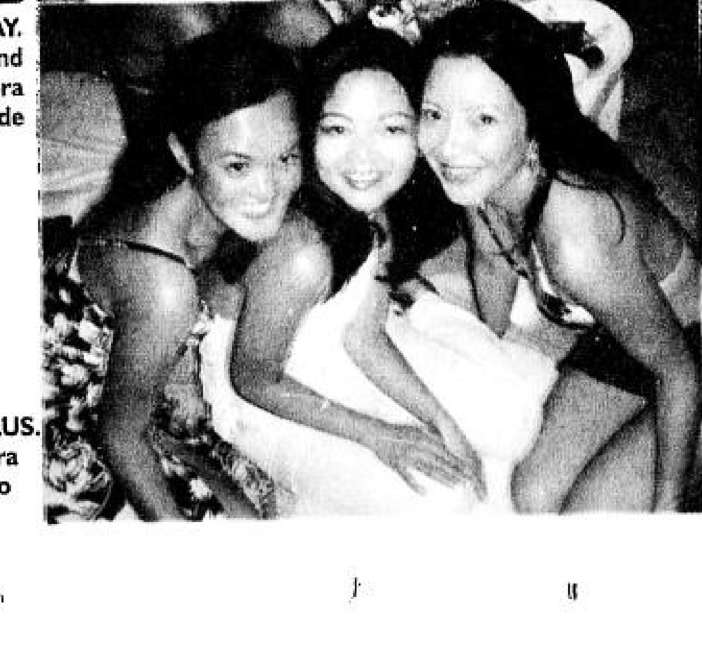

THREE PLAY. Cheese. Maui and Marg. et in Bora mode

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BASEMENT PLUS. Bridgitte Badura and DJ Montano

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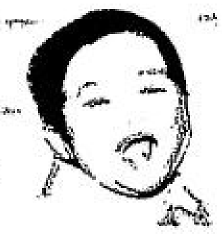
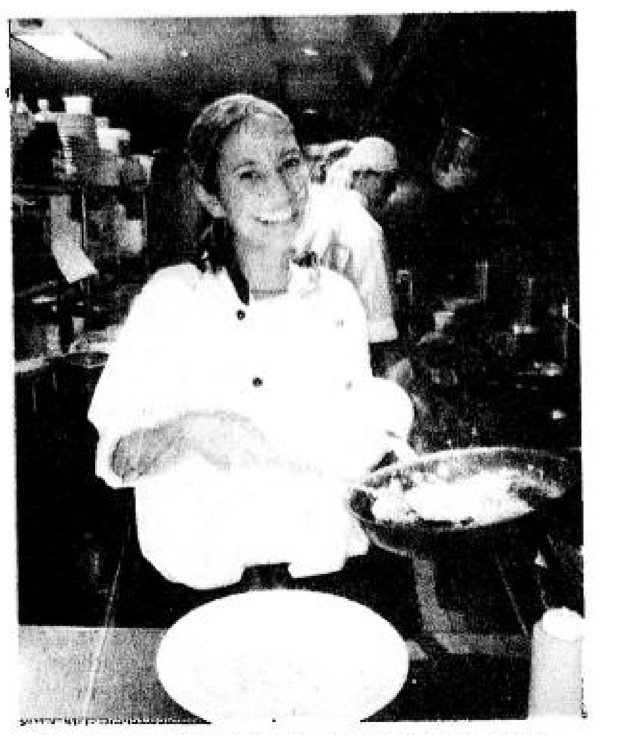


Tim Yap

'It' Girls' last-ditch effort for a tan!

FREEWAY girl G Töngi at the pool party before flying back to Los Angeles, California.

U GO GIRLS! Hindy Tantoco and Celine Lopez chill out at the Sky bar of West at Ayala



PIÈCE DE RÉSISTANCE. Stephanie Zubiri behind the kitchen at Restaurant 12. Catch her tonight!

> While none of our fave girls got their golden brown hues, they surely made the month much, much hotter.

WEEKEND warriors looking for the thrill pill recently went for all-out indulgence, from gastronomic grace to wet, wet, wet fantasies. The urban guerilla was up for the fight!

It must be the weather, or maybe the last few weeks before the campus calendar clicks, but the merry month of May sure has its fair share of fashionable frolic!

First up was gorgeously glam **G Töngi** behind the bar at Famous. She displayed her bartending skills, mixing one martini after another for the tantalizingly thirsty hip crowd that had gathered as Freeway launched its sizzling "Got G!" campaign.

I heard that just a week after Freeway launched its G billboards, the top that **Giselle** wore got completely sold out! And she wasn't even here at the time. Now how's that for endorse-ability?

Earlier that day, an exclusive screening was held for select members of the press. At the after-party, Giselle's famous friends came for support. **Epi Quizon, JM Rodriguez, Ira Cruz**, et al. upped the hip vibe at the dessert bar of **Joji Dingcong** and **Karen Pascual**. Freeway's fashion maven **Sheree Gotuaco** was a sight to behold in red orientalia as she mingled with the stylish set.

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SLIPPERY WHEN WET. Party host with the most Chut Cuerva, Arnold Martinez and Victor Consunji.

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MOVING WITH THE MUSIC

THE nightlife scene here has progressed leaps and bounds over the past five years. Bars and nightclubs are mushrooming from Makati to Malate and Quezon City to Libis.

Why the sudden boom of nightspots and hangouts?

The answer: It's got to be the music!

Is music really so influential? Well, let's take a trip and go back to the roots, to where it all began.

Did you ever wonder where Hip Hop and R&B music came from?

Hip-Hop and R&B music we listen to today dates back to 1955-70, during the time of the civil rights movement. This was an exciting time to be alive! It was sort of like the scene from "Forrest Gump" where people were involved in non-violent protests like sit-ins and marches speaking out against the government. You might remember the late Dr. Martin Luther King's famous speech where he exclaims "...joining hands with people of races and nationalities and saying to them, we are free at last! Thank God almighty we are free at last!" This was a time when African Americans were struggling to gain basic civil rights for all Americans, regardless of race. The music was a product of the environment by the musicians who lived during that time. Back then it was called "Soul" or "Funk" music. People used to style their hair big in afros like Jimi Hendrix, wear Dashiki's and red black and green colored buttons on their shirts. Artists would sing of change and reform, using music as a tool to instill pride and describe the social condition of black people. Music often had a message in it. Just listen to Bob Marley sing "Get up, stand up, stand up for your rights" or "A Change Is Gonna Come" by Sam Cooke. There was a sense of pride and positivity in the music, that brought people together. Funk was considered taboo in the eyes of society and those who listened, played at or attended those parties were seen as rebels or outcasts. The music was experimental—way ahead of its time, and the masses were just not ready for it. The music had power to inform the people listening to it, on what was happening around them through the lyrics in the songs. So powerful in fact that it spread across to Europe and the world, gaining support from other nations to join the cause. Just listen to the music that is being played on your favorite radio station today. Many of the new songs being played borrow lyrics or sounds sampled from all these old songs. Just check out Puff Daddy or the Notorious BIG. Dig around and find the samples they used, and you'll get the picture.

Then came the 1980s, and funk and disco music were winding down. Just when that funky music seemed to die out, a new sound came popping up. New groups and DJ's started to create music that gave listeners something new to think—and dance about. Groups like Run DMC and Grandmaster Flash and the Furious Five. People were no longer singing melodies, they were talking or "rapping" words to a beat. People went crazy to this new form of music! Many said that it was a phase that would not last. But others hoped that artists would add to it, and keep it alive. Now, 20 years later rap music has grown and stood the test of time. We can only hope that the music preserves its integrity and delivers a positive message. The same way it intended in the past, so that it gives listeners today something that we can hold our head high and be proud of.

You might ask yourself why are DJ's so popular today?

There are so many different kinds of dance music out there to listen to. How did this all come to be?

Stemming from funk and soul music came disco—which had people dancing in ways they never had before! Just picture yourself in the movie Studio 54 or Boogie Nights. That should give you a good idea of what to expect. High end eccentric fashion, Gucci and Halston in full effect! It was during this time that the disc jockey, better known as the DJ, was born. There have been many DJ's that dabbled with playing with the sounds of records and mixing them together. Everyone contributed in their own way to building the scene. Two such DJ's that come to mind are Larry Levan and DJ Kool Herc. When explaining the work and influence of DJ's, a song comes to mind:

Wendell Garcia

"Last Night a DJ Saved My Life". It might sound funny but it makes a lot of sense to the music "heads" out there. In fact, it reflects what is currently happening with the scene here in Metro Manila. For me, life would be boring without music. In this hectic and often trying world we live in, people need an outlet—a release from the stress and pressure of everyday life. It is nice to listen to different types of music according to the mood that you are in. It takes your mind away for a moment, gives you the solace and peace that your soul needs.

"There's not a problem that I can't fix, 'cause I can do it in the mix."

That line once again from the song "Last Night A DJ Saved My Life".

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Well picture this; when you go out to a club or nightspot, it's the DJ's job to set the mood and ambiance for the crowd. It is an art to be able to make people move and sway up and down, left and right to the music without tiring them out or making them bored for the whole night. When the DJ drops your favorite track or teases it in at the right time during the night, it makes the people dancing go nuts! They have to hear that track! Larry Levan of the Paradise Garage in New York City (where Garage "house" music coined its name) was one of the first DJ's to do just that! He was considered one of the pioneers in creating what the DJ culture is today. Larry's very own mixing style used a song's instrumental parts, break beats and acapella's to make completely new "live" remixes. His style inspired many other DJ's to experiment mixing different sounds to make the audience go wild! His experience as a club DJ eventually led him into the studio as a 12" singles remixer. It was from disco, soul and funk that "house" music was born! Soothing heavy bass lines accompanied with jazzy soulful lyrics. That is the spirit of house music. Dance music has stemmed off into different genres since then, but the essence of its origin still remains in the songs.

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Color of car may vary from actual prize. See mechanics posters for details. Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 1171 Series of 2003.

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Compiled by Wendell Garcia and Adrian Cuenca

***Acquario**
Thursday: "Pure"
San Francisco House Music
feat. Benjo Marquez
Friday: ladies night "Bellisima"
feat. DJ Erwin Edralin and guest DJs

***V-Bar**
Tuesday: "Stargazing at Louie Y"
Retro Night resident DJ: Arnel
Thursday: BBC's "Electrobrasil" once a month
Friday: "Summer Fling" NBK every other Friday
Saturday: "Ebulient" feat. DJ Bombi

*Restaurant 12
Friday: "12 @ 12"
Deep jazzy soulful house music.
Chilled atmosphere
Exclusive V.I.P. list only
DJ Pornstar and Chip de la Calzada

***Nuvo**
Saturday: Aprés (after)
Smooth Sexy House Music
DJ Chip de la Calzada & DJ Wendell Garcia

***Vodka Ice**
"Solo"
Progressive house
feat. DJ Manolet Dario

***Culture Club**
Wednesday: SUBFLEX
Progressive and Abstract Hip Hop with live performances
featuring DJ Caliph8

***Wherelse**
Wednesday: Hip Hop
Saturday: Hip Hop "Hype"

***Temple Bar and Restaurant**
Wednesday: Every 1st & 3rd Wednesday NBK's
"Reincarnate"
the past and presents club anthems.
Manolet Dario plus guests
Thursdays:
"Divine Playground"
From progressive to house and everything else in between
Featuring DJ Kevin Ruiz
And guests: Adrian Cuenca
Elian Habayeb
Roman Mojica
Friday:
Saturday: Every 2nd & 4th Saturday
"Faith"
Progressive to House to Tribal
Manolet Dario, David Jacob and Raji Mata

***Bed**
Thursday: Resident DJs
Cocoy Puyat
Travis Monsod
Friday: Kevin Ruiz once a month TBC

***EBISU**
Wednesday: Old Skool
R& B/ Hip Hop
DJ Bad Boy Jeff
Saturday: June 14/28 BBC's Kamikaze Lounge
June 7/21 Luscious Saturdays
San Francisco house music
Featuring DJ Benjo Marquez

Olive
Thursday: "Urban Suite: the R&B Liquid Lounge" w/ DJ Lester Castillo
Friday: "House Living"
Groovy Funky House w/ DJs MYK Tolentino
Anthony Kierulf, Mark & Jon Navall
Saturday: "Hard On"
Progressive House, Techno and Hard Dance
DJs Nicky Jurado
Owens Sun
Jade
Myk Tolentino
Basement
Friday: "Fusion Fridays"
A mix of R&B/House
DJ Ace
DJ Chewie
Saturday: House Music
DJ Oliver
DJ Chewie

Green Planet
Saturday: "Ear Candy" w/ Roman Mojica
House, trance & progressive

Absinth
Tuesday: "Ladies Night" with DJ Ann
Wednesday: "Smooth Wednesday" R&B DJ Steve Mills
Friday: Deep Groovy House
"Mirror Ball"
DJs Erwin Edralin Rafayez
Saturday: Disco Latino House
"Buena Vida"
DJ Patch

Special Events
June 12: Bigfish Presents Ibiza's Pacha w/ DJ Wally Lopez
June 12: L8R@wherelse with Kevin Ruiz the Pacha official after hours party.

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Madonna's new album American Life out now in CD's and Cassettes nationwide.

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madonna5

TITLE Track	POLYTONES Keyword
Holiday	holiday
Material Girl	materialgrl
Like A Virgin	likavirgin
Live To Tell	live2tell
Cherish	cherish
Crazy For You	crazy4u
Vogue	vogue
Take A Bow	takeabow
I'll Remember	iiremember
Ray Of Light	rayoflight
Frozen	frozen
Music	music
Die Another Day	dieanother
American Life	amercanlyf
Borderline	borderline

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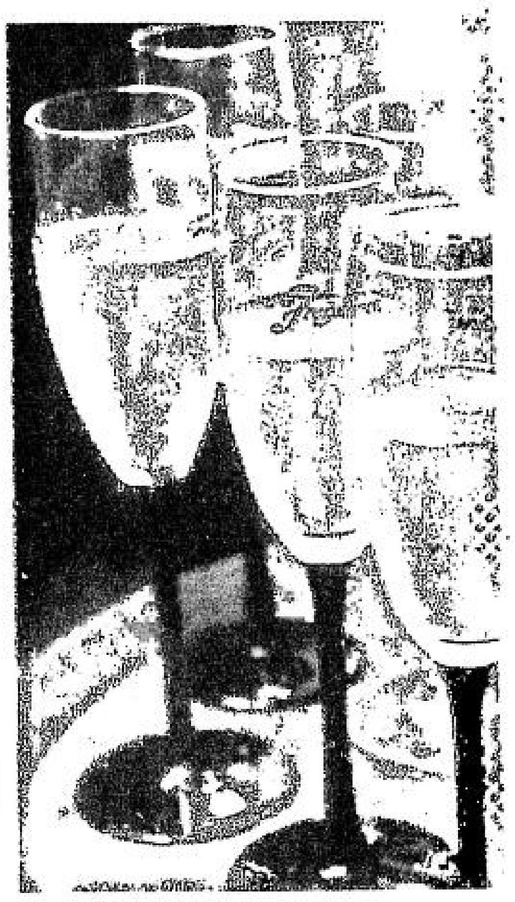

Super selections

Book: Tongue First

Emily Jenkins

EMILY Jenkins explores the deepest caves of physical culture by trying to experience everything - from going bald and getting a tattoo to trying sensory deprivation, acupuncture, public baths and strip clubs - and then writing about it. The subject is already grand in itself and the author's courage commendable but above that, the author's style really is the reason to pick up this book. Emily Jenkins is a gifted writer. She flows. Her writing is so liquid that she can move from talking about personal experiences to scientific data without one noticing until one has already absorbed what she is trying to say. She brandishes her wit and intelligence with grace and flair.

CD: A Wonderful World

Tony Bennett and k.d. lang

Sure, sure, pairing Tony Bennett with k.d. lang may seem crazy. That is, until you hear the beautiful music this duo can make.

The album features old favorites like "Exactly Like You," "If We Never Meet Again," "I'm Confessin'" and "What A Wonderful World."

Bringing together the two gifted and multi-awarded singers was a brilliant move. The combination of their vocal prowess is light and powerful at the same time.

The album is perfect to listen to during long drives, when you want to relax at home on a rainy afternoon or when you're having company over for dinner.

Website: Internet Movie Database

www.imdb.com

Internet users who have discovered the joys of IMBD.com have developed the habit of looking up new movies they watched on the website. And for good reason. IMDB is a treasure trove of information about the movies that you love and loathe. Search for trivia about your favorite movies. Find out where Hollywood slipped up in the goofs section. Get access to your favorite actor's filmography. Reread your favorite movie quotes. Spend enough time on IMDB and you can annoy your friends by being a movie know-it-all. Say, did you know that Britney Spears was actually considered for a part in Chicago? And that the 17-minute battle scene in Matrix Reloaded over $40 million to shoot?

Video: Requiem for a Dream

Getting hooked on drugs isn't the only form of addiction. Requiem for a Dream clearly depicts this through the lives of four individuals whose paths are connected in different ways. These people each carry a burden that pushes them to succumb to their different addictions. The viewer is then taken on a horrifying ride while watching each character live through the pain and their downfall. Watching the loss of their innocence is devastating.

This movie will not only make you think, it

DIRECTOR'S CUT
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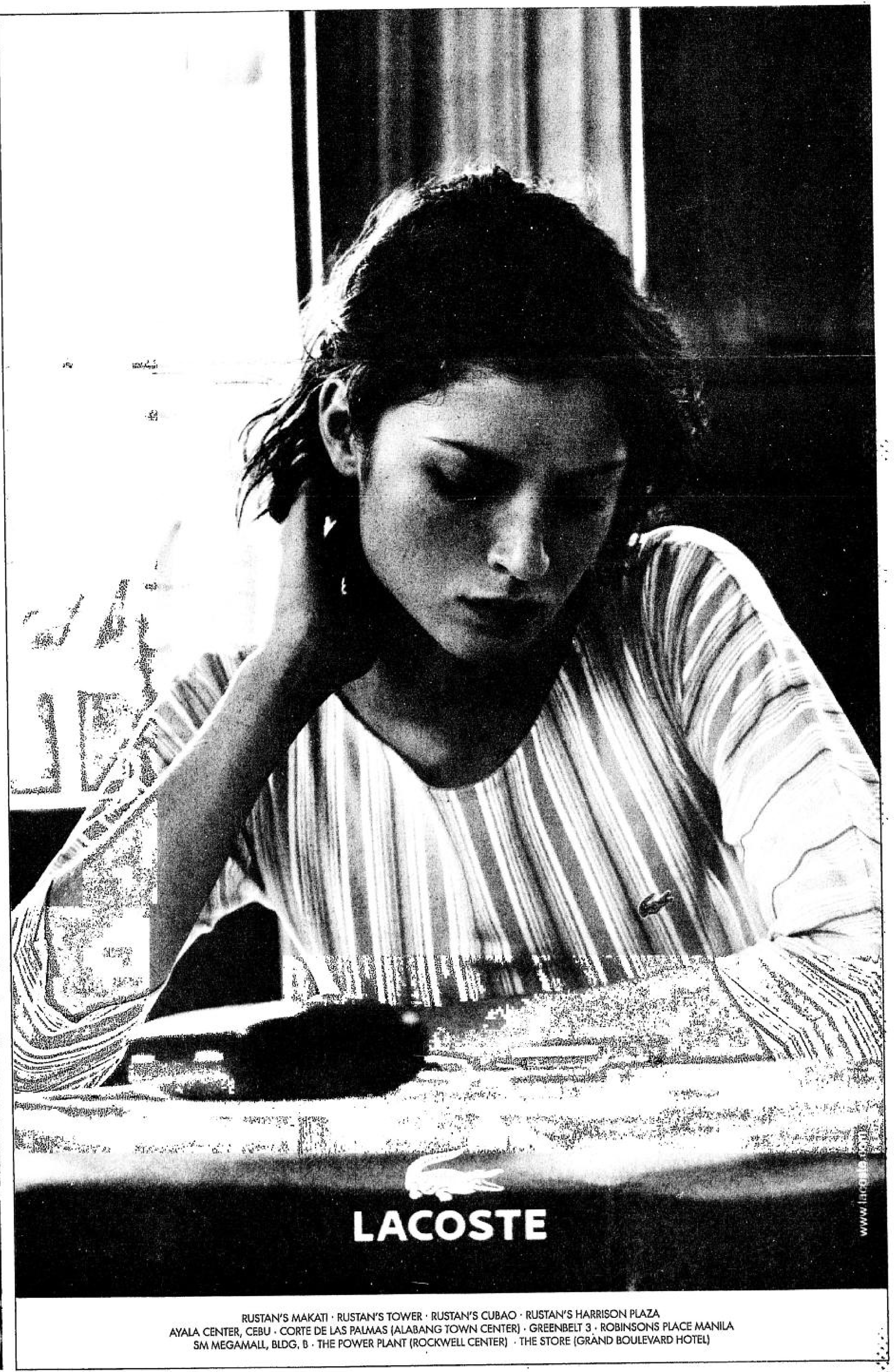
ELLEN BURSTYN
JARED LETO JENNIFER CONNELLY
MARLON WAYANS
FROM THE DIRECTOR OF
REQUIEM FOR A DREAM



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Beyond and Beyonder

Interview by Tim Yap

TY: Define your art.

AC: Pluralistic. Collectively, our interests are varied, and our creative horizons are expanding. We're not satisfied with traditions and training, but are always trying to explore, push each other's boundaries. Go beyond.

ST: It's a dialogue. A combination of our creative identities, our different interests and aspirations—it's important, and more interesting, to be working on a lot of levels.

TY: How do you relate your work with birth?

AC: The awakening of an idea...birth is never complete without rebirth—it's a continual process, it's survival. This piece is not about birth, specifically, but was a result of our thinking about birth, and it was born of that particular moment, which will never happen again.

ST: Think of it as a small cut out of the bigger picture- the universe, the revolution of planets, the "bang."

AC: Yet it also scales down, from complex to simple, from the universal to the intensely personal—human relationships and their building blocks—you are here, and here is now. It's a dream, its Darwinian, it's existential...The painting is very childlike, but the relationships between the elements have more flavor than that.

ST: Ladies and gentlemen, we are floating in space.

TY: Where do you draw inspiration from?

AC: Dreams, street culture, literature, all types of fiction... things that make us laugh. Above all style.

ST: Actually a lot of our work have inside jokes, so I guess you could say some inspiration comes from our shared experiences.

AC: I'm siding with the forces of life.

TY: The scene-headed backward or forward?

AC: Any movement is progress, you can't really move backwards. We see so much potential here, but a lot of the energy is misspent. There are so many creative, multi-talented people here and we feel privileged to be able to participate in the scene. We think we have a lot to contribute, but we know there's more that we can learn than we can give to it. What's good, but also unfortunate, is that talented here just outweighs opportunity.

ST: Design here hasn't been consolidated as a social value yet, it hasn't been given a chance to work outside of its merely decorative purpose. Design, however, is crucial.

TY: Young society now is...

AC: In a crisis!

TY: Your anti-jadedness potion?

AC: Can we say that ...?

ST: Don't you think that would incriminate us?

AC: I think in Moscow it is still illegal.

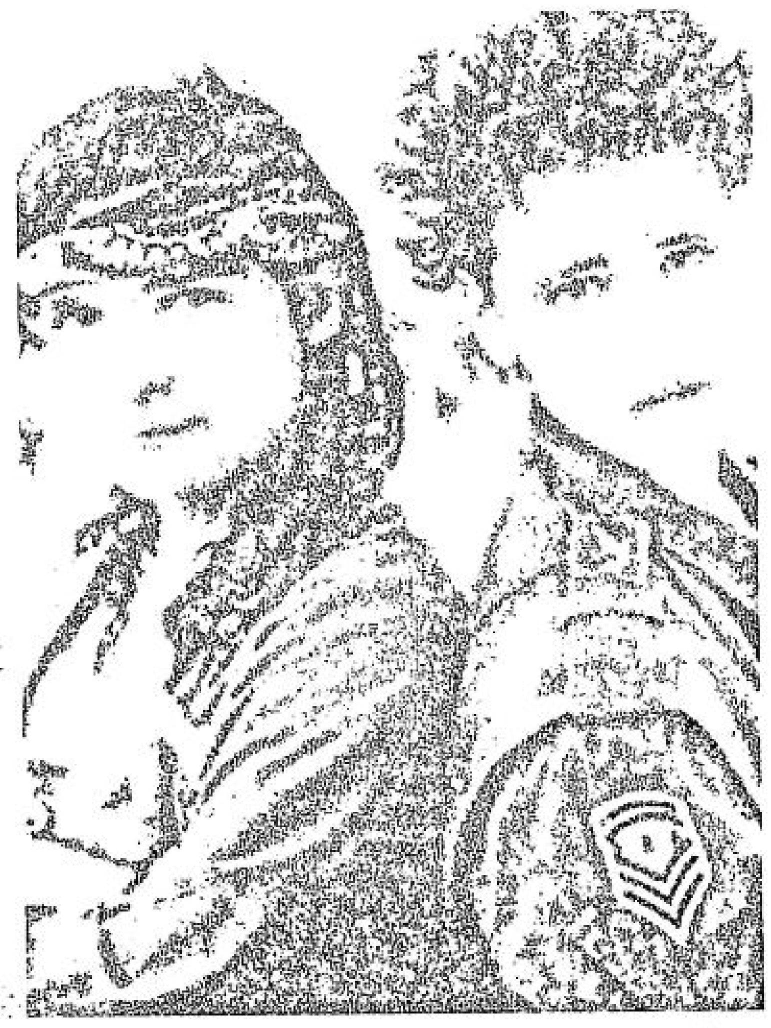
ST: The multiplicity and disunity of this universe is confusing.

TY: Favorite subjects?

AC: Anything booby gravy.

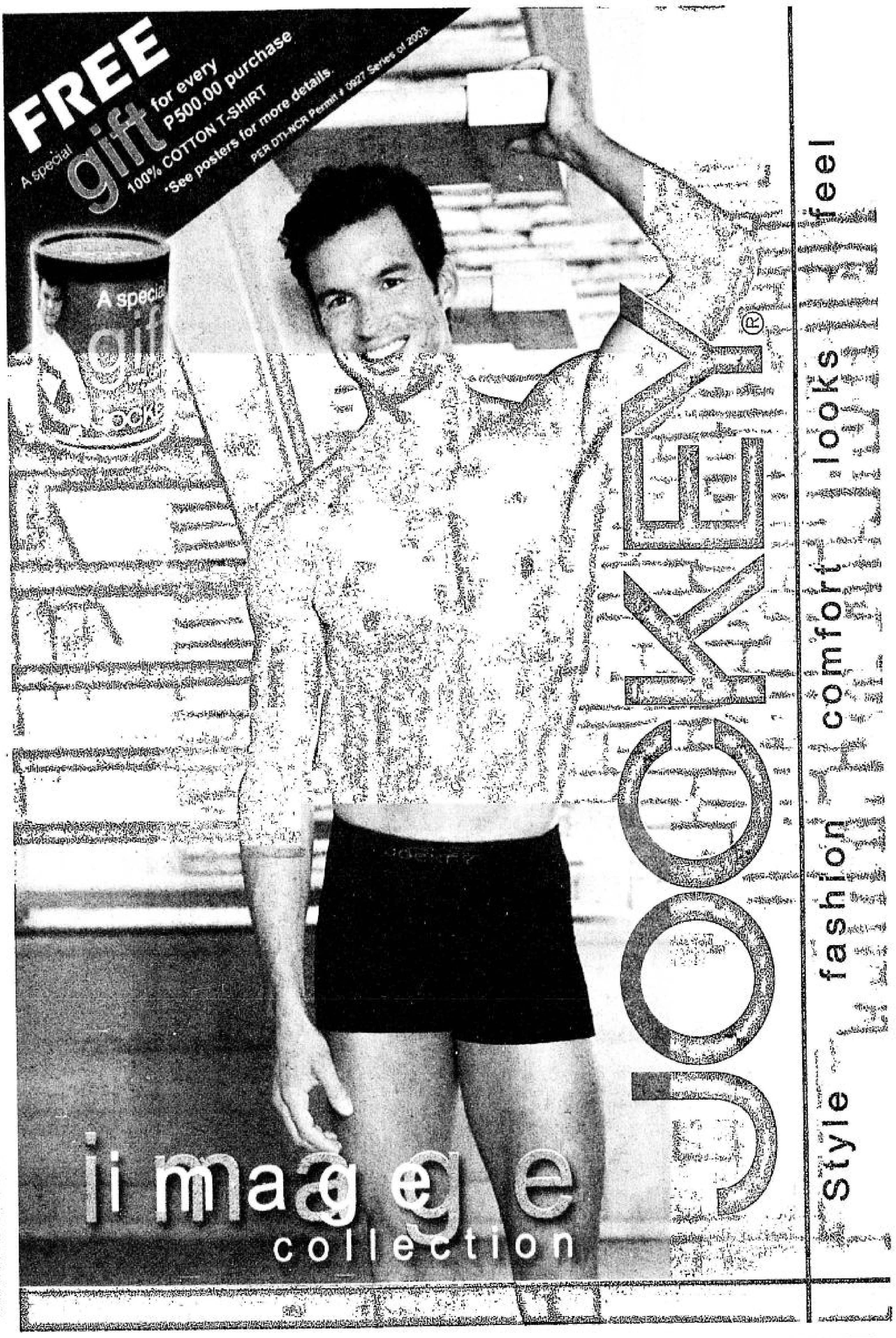
TY: What's the best thing about you being born?

AC: All the presents you get for doing nothing!



BEYONDER is a creative solutions studio founded by 24-year-old designer slash art director Adrian Calumpang and 27-year-old photographer Stephen Tirona. Beyonder is an artist collaboration that works in across the board media.

Inspiration sandwich.
Each week, we provide the space for creativity to flow. Using the blank page as canvas, artists can express themselves freely—a dream factory of words and images. These days we all need to be inspired.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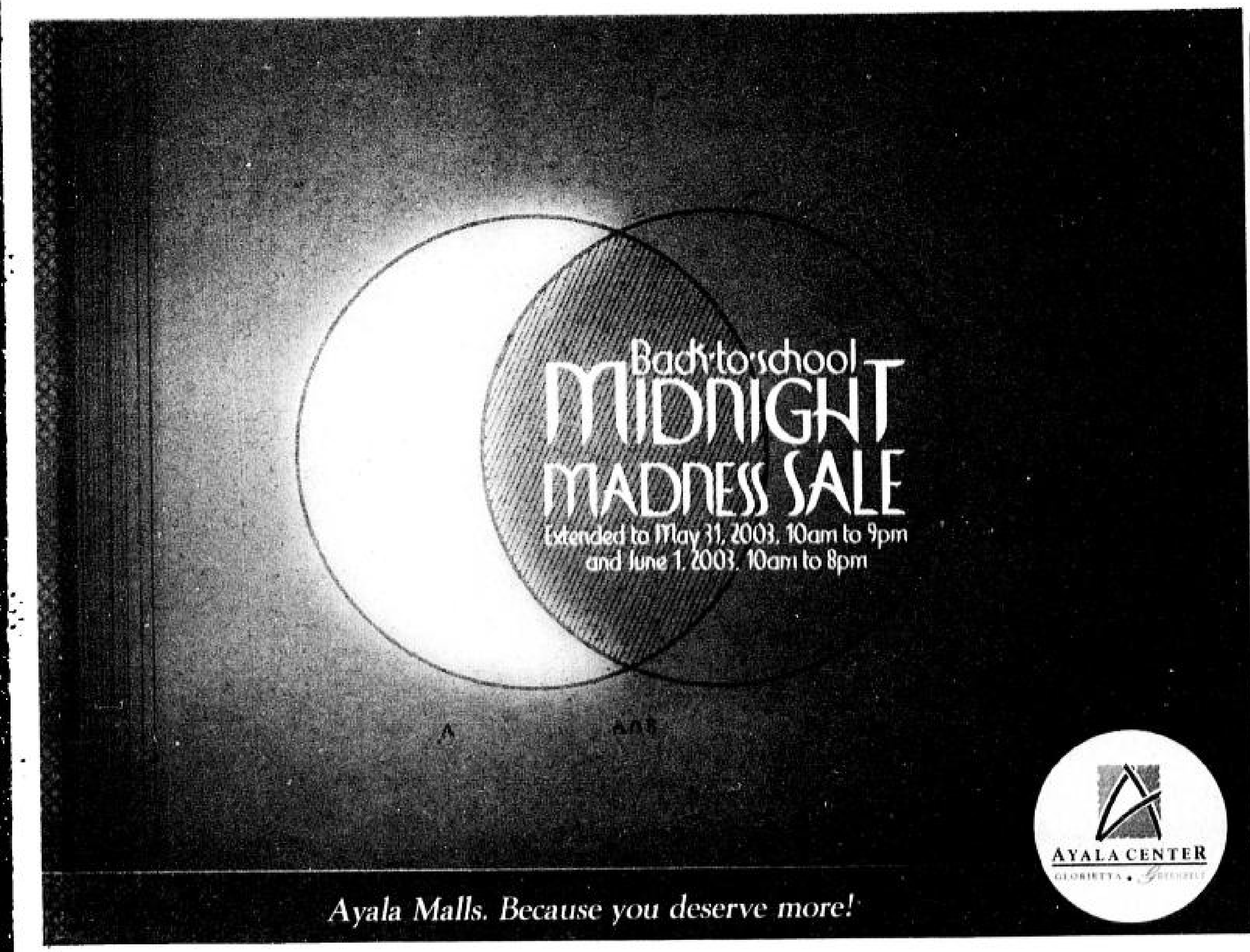
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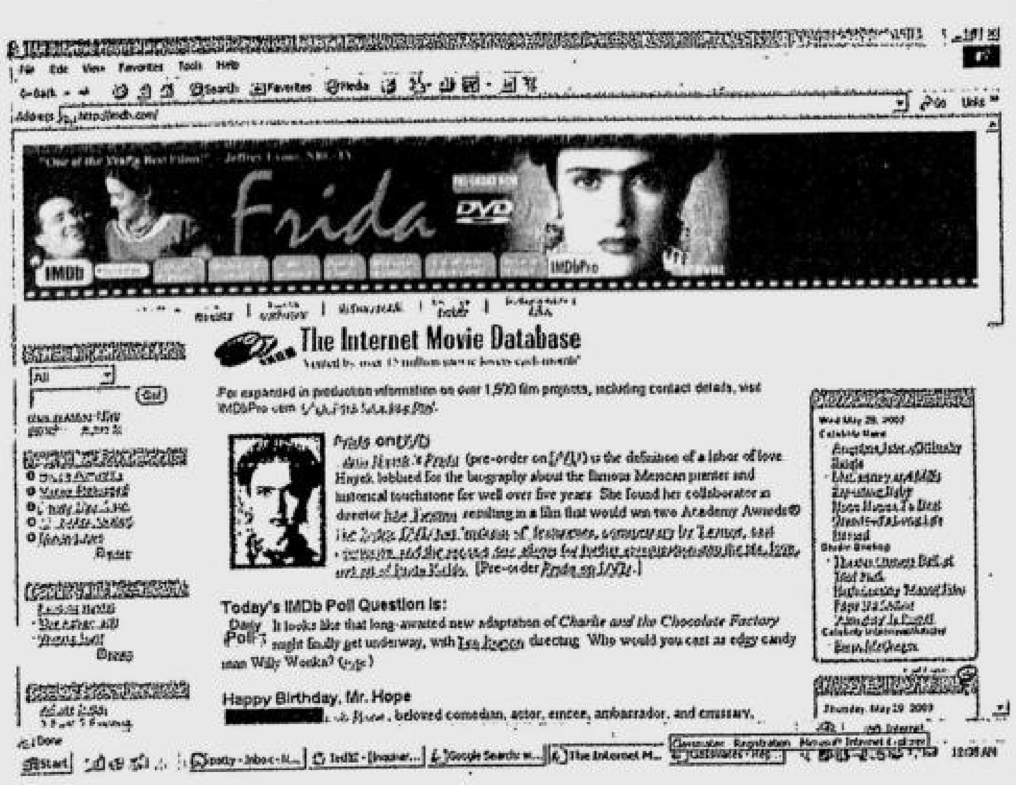

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The Internet Movie Database

Today's IMDb Poll Question is:

Happy Birthday, Mr. Hope

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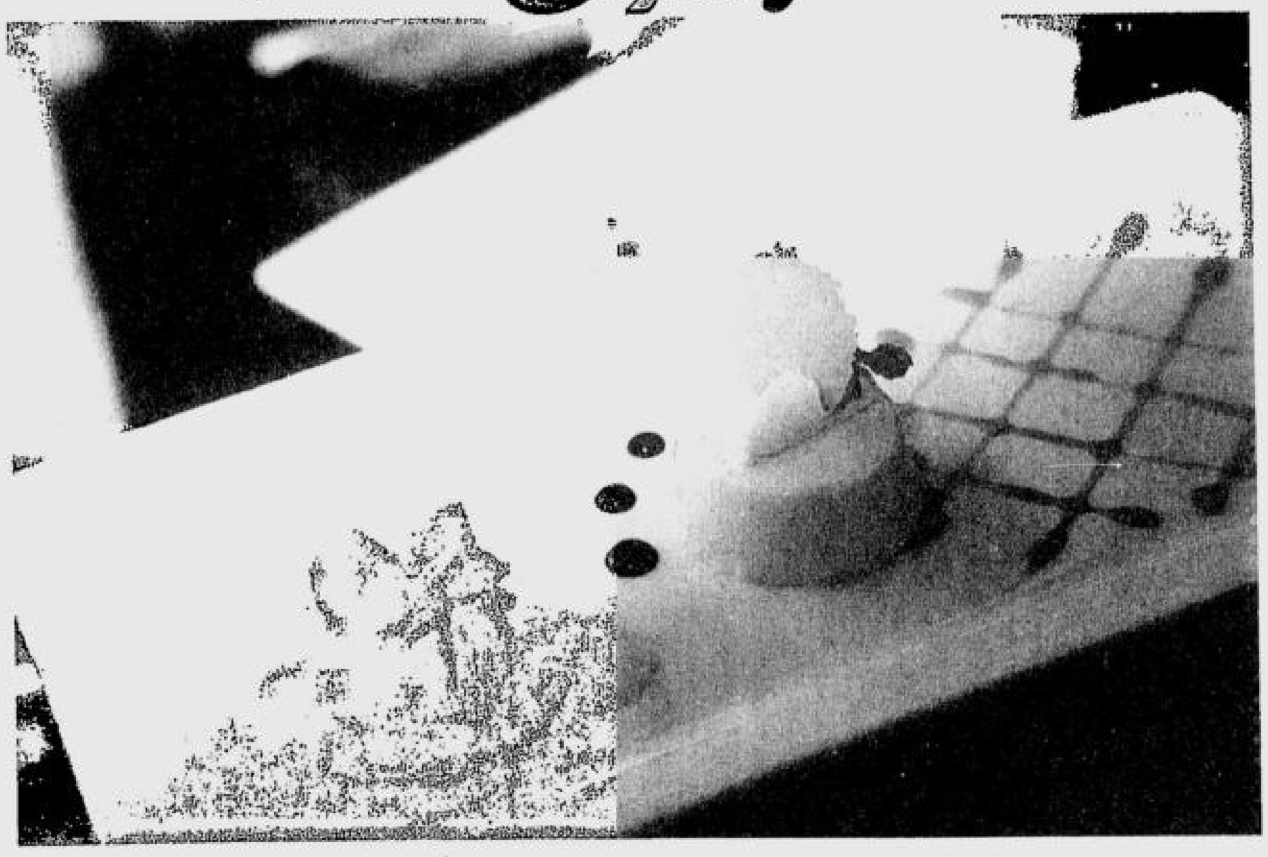

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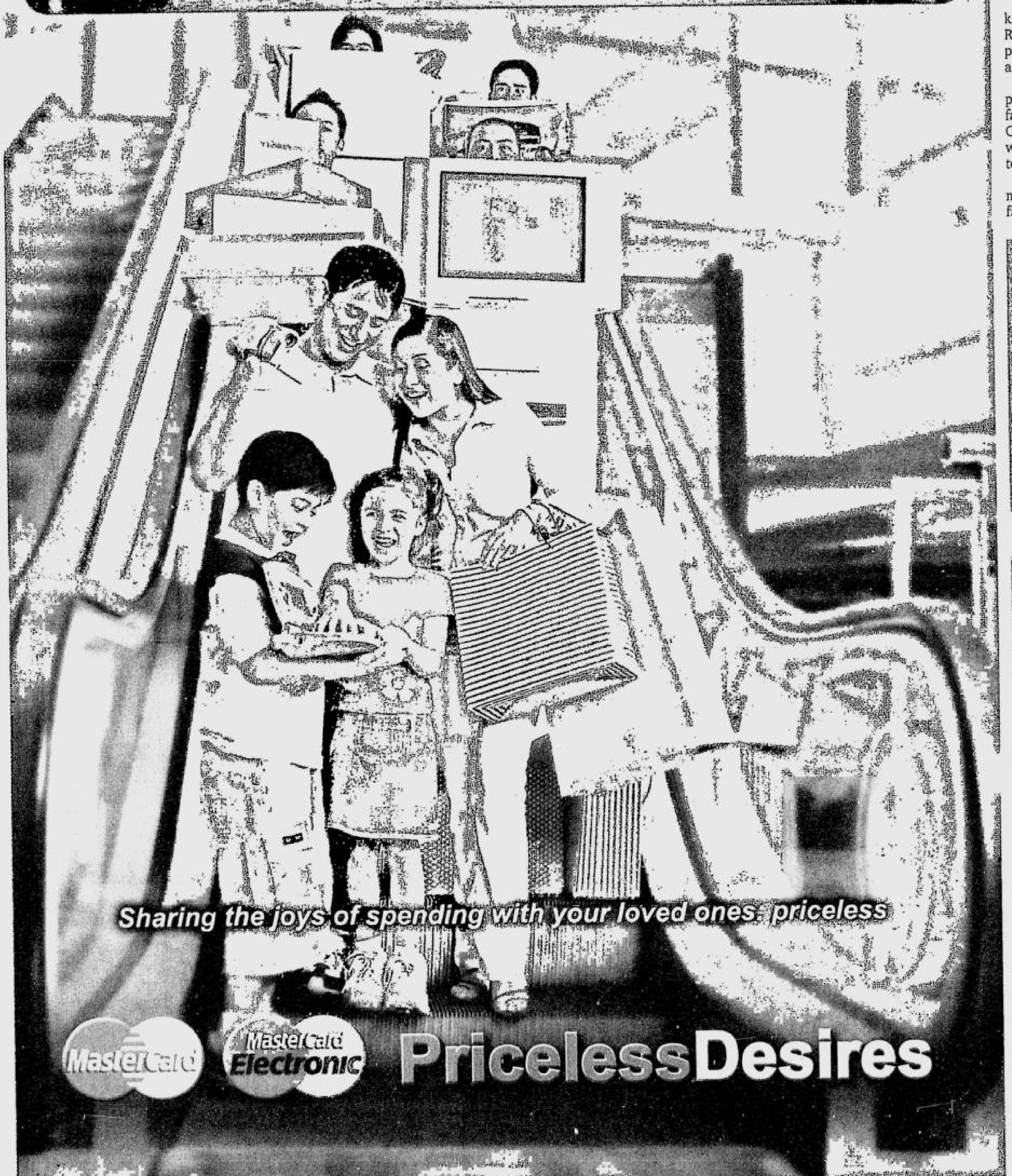

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Free Nokia 6610 to be given away to Daily Lucky Callers from May 16 - June 15, 2003.

Promo is from May 16 to August 15, 2003. See poster for details. *Approved by DTI-NCR Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 1161, Series of 2003

Super selections

From page G1

will make you feel.

Make sure you keep a comedy handy though. Most people need to recover after watching this film.

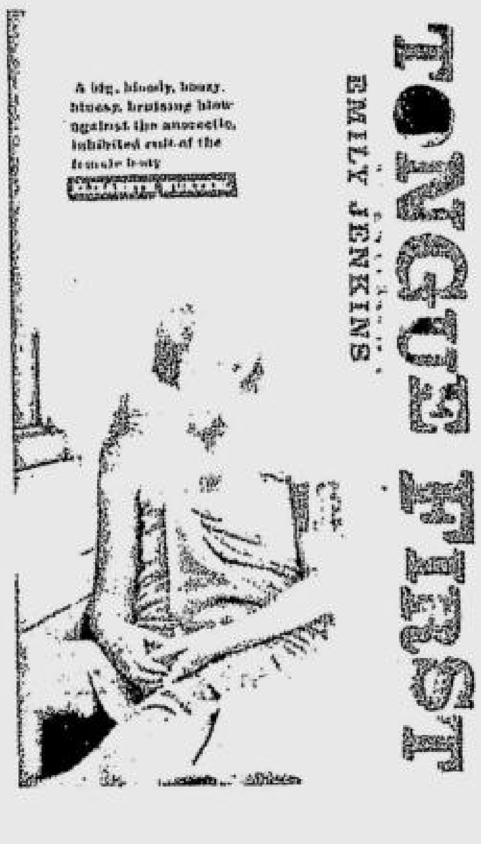
Restaurant:

A listers this side of town have a new spot to go to--Azzurro at Sommerset Hotel boasts of a banquet room and a private party hall that spells F-U-N!

With Chef Philip Golding behind the kitchen and the Bermudez sisters Sheila Romero, Trish and Bubbles at the helm, expect palate treats and party delights worthy of a feast.

Their exclusive black and white opening party drew the town's chi chi set from the fashion, glitz biz and arts set, while a Vanilla Coke Mystery dinner was hosted recently where the young and the hip participated all too gamely.

So, sick and tired of mall based entertainment? Hop onto the A trail this weekend for a fab and fun time.



TONGUE FIRST
EMILY JENKINS
A big, bloody, boozy, bluesy, bruising blow against the anorectic, inhibited cult of the female body

SATURDAY Special Super!

The Birth of Super

Style, urban living, pop culture, entertainment and recreation - ain't that SUPER? Welcome to your weekly addition to your Saturday Special addiction - a reminder that getting there, after all, is all the fun.

Text and photo compilation by Tim Yap

They say that we are all born into greatness, and that we must discover the magic that makes us all unique. Do you know why you were born? Do you recall the last time you felt intimately moved, knowing your life's purpose? Or are we just floating on the river of our existence? Small minds dictate uniformity, to go with the flow of things and not stick out. The minute we are born, we cry out for sheer joy in seeing the world. Our senses pulsate with a newfound discovery-life takes on a new turn of growth

Somewhere along the way, we grew older, and instead of building bridges, we learn to construct brick walls. Living in fear, we surround ourselves with a false sense of security, with the things we think we need to fill the void within us - things that offer fleeting pleasure.

We become so obsessed with the end goal that we forget the journey, the joy of treading the path to enlightenment. We may trip along the way, but it's in bouncing back that life becomes all the more fun. In a world that's so pre-occupied with getting it right, we do have time to make mistakes. It's okay.

As babies, we saw the world as it was, and we saw it as inspiring, and not daunting. As children, when we saw someone beautiful, it never elicited feelings of envy. As babies we forgave right away, without any strings attached, as it should be. As children, we loved with wanton abandon, surrendering our senses and our thoughts, just the way love should be in our lives. And we cried when we felt pain, and didn't keep it to ourselves.

It's so strange that as infants, we knew exactly how to live, when passion was at its rawest, thoughts at their most innocent, joy at its clearest.

If you think about it, those who shine are those who have maintained that child-like quality within them.

If you listen to yourself, and become open to what the world has to offer, you will find what inspires you. But if you listen to those people who tell you why it can't be, then you'll never move forward and go beyond yourself.

It's okay to aim for the stars even if you know you won't reach them, because you may just surprise yourself and land on the moon.

As they always say, life is what happens when you're busy making plans. Don't let it pass you by.

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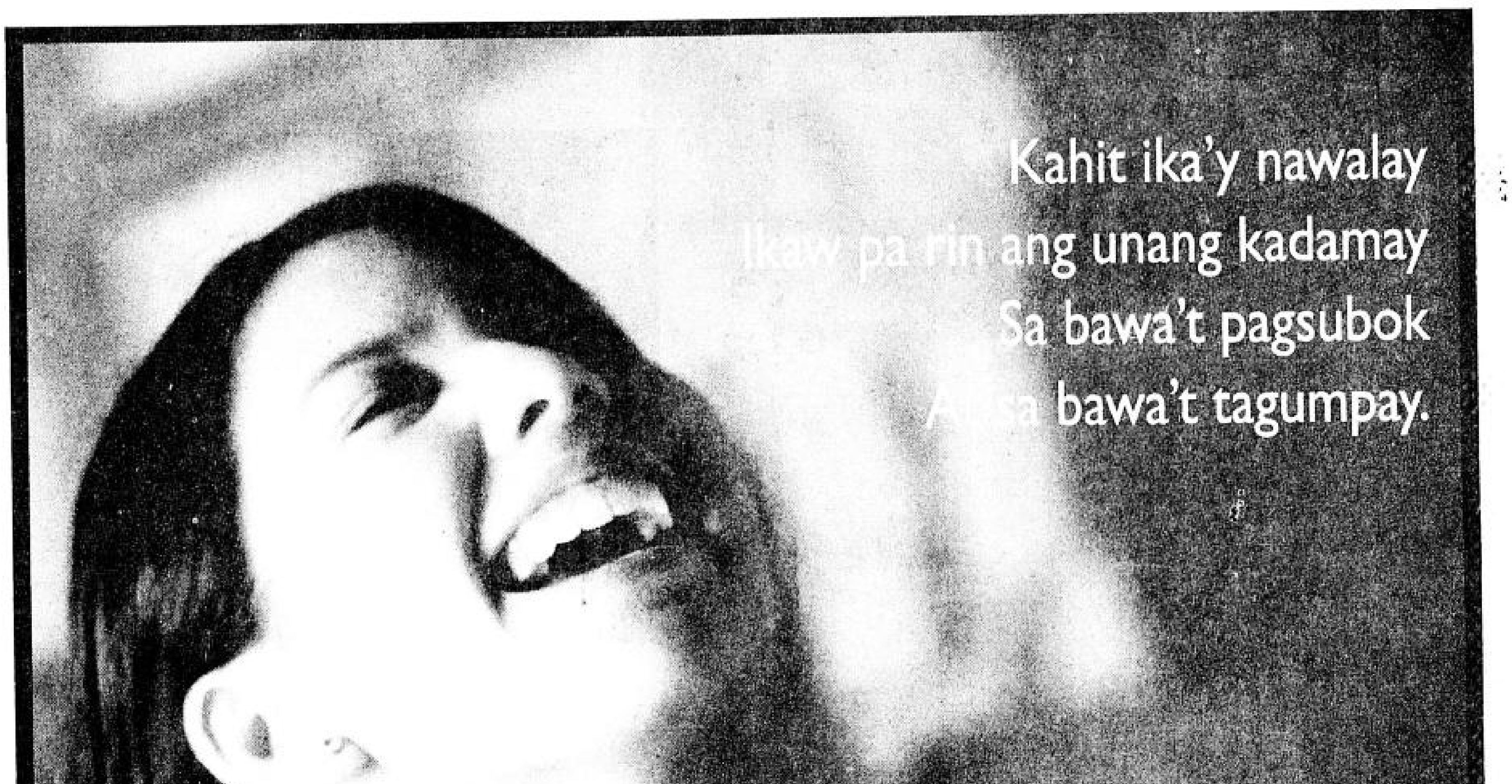

Para kay Jenny Santos, ang ate niyang nasa London ang laging una niyang takbuhan.
Kasi sa ilang minuto lang, nakapagpapadala na ito ng tuition sa tulong ng Western Union.

Parang si Ate mismo ang nag-abot kaya panatag ang loob nilang dalawa. At ngayong nagtapos na si Jenny,
si Ate rin ang unang makakatanggap ng magandang balita!

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Ryan Villareal

Rissa Samson

Anton Ra

Inez, Francisco and Juan Miguel Delgado

Ida Camdo

Julius Babao

Ton Lao

The Birth of

88 Super!
personalities—models, actors, artists, writers, celebrities, entrepreneurs, professionals, your next-door neighbors, friends and relatives—share with us their favorite baby moments.

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Judy Ann Santos

Mich Astudillo

Joseph Pascual

Amanda and Mark Griffin

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Claudine Trillo

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Teddy and Manolet Dario

Lance R

Myrza Sison

Pauline Suaco

Bianca Valerio

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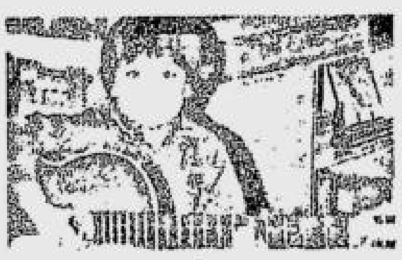
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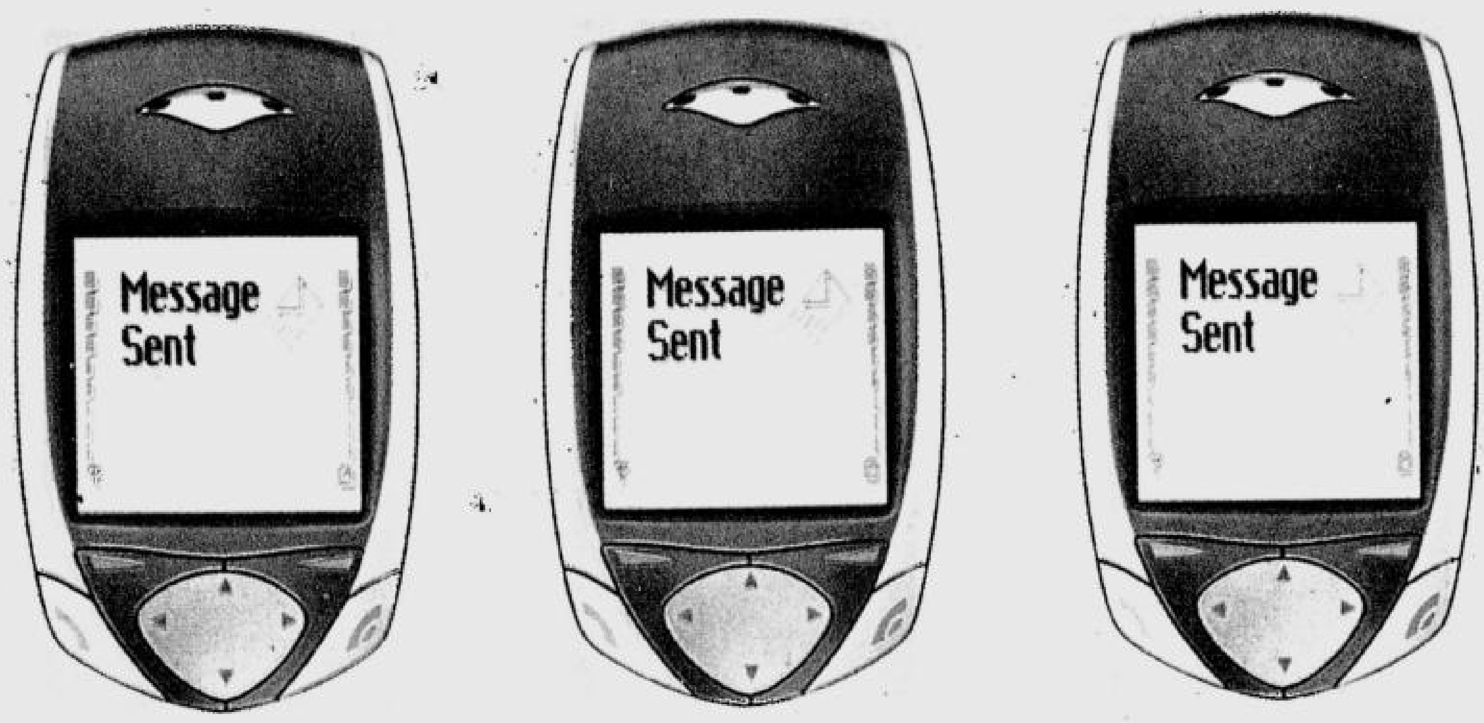

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SATURDAY

Elizabeth Taylor gives living and loving everything she's got

TAYLOR. Captivating combination of playfully upturned nose, sultry lips, wasp waist—and oh, those Elizabeth Taylor eyes!

By Nestor U. Torre

BEFORE the Oscar awards night last March 23, Hollywood star-emeritus Elizabeth Taylor announced that the glittering ceremony would be her last show biz appearance. Naturally, her fans eagerly looked for her, both on the red carpet and onstage, but she was nowhere to be found.

Prerogative

It turned out that she was indisposed, so she moved her "swan song" appearance to another date, which she again failed to keep. Well, it's a lady's prerogative to change her—appointments secretary?

In any case, Ms Taylor's "final-final" show biz appearance is moot and academic, because she's stopped performing for many years now. The last time we saw her on TV was at her friend Michael Jackson's 20th anniversary show, and all she did then was look grumpy whenever the cameras focused on her (absolutely no close-ups, please!).

Some people may find such behavior a turn-off, but we didn't really mind, because we feel that Dame Elizabeth has done so much for the world of entertainment that she's entitled to her "diva of the cinema" quirks.

Child star

People on the young side of 50 are to be commiserated with because they didn't see Elizabeth Taylor in the first, full blush of youth. As a child star in "National Velvet," she was memorably pert and lovely. Her only problems appeared to be her thin speaking voice and her being "vertically challenged."

When she began playing young-adult roles, her beauty bloomed into a delicate yet intensely captivating combination of playfully upturned nose, sultry lips, wasp waist—and oh, those Elizabeth Taylor eyes, tinted a rare violet that made millions of less-blessed women go green with envy!

Thin voice

Elizabeth at 20 *was* the most beautiful woman in the world, both on and off the silver screen. But her thin voice never really acquired a mature texture and she didn't grow any taller, so the goddess of the cinema was made more human in female viewers' eyes by those consoling imperfections.

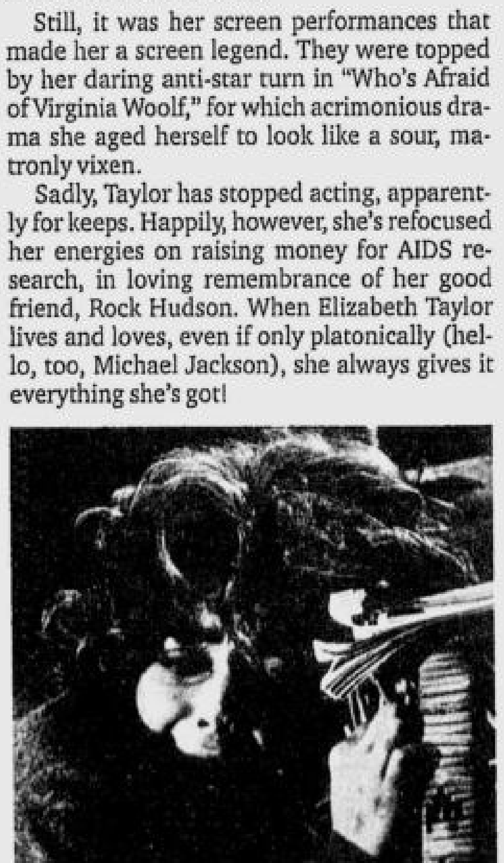
As for her male admirers, a lot they cared, anyway. To them, Taylor was exceptional because she combined her physical beauty with a feisty temperament—a dominatrix without a whip. So they took her on her terms and just considered themselves lucky when she deigned to make them her slaves.

Trouble was, she had a short attention span in this regard, so she whipped through seven or so husbands before she decided that it wasn't worth all the effort. She did have her great, tempestuous loves, though—Mike Todd and Richard Burton—and her big scandal—Eddie Fisher, whom she stole from the naive and clueless Debbie Reynolds.

Acrimonious drama

Still, it was her screen performances that made her a screen legend. They were topped by her daring anti-star turn in "Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf," for which acrimonious drama she aged herself to look like a sour, matronly vixen.

Sadly, Taylor has stopped acting, apparently for keeps. Happily, however, she's refocused her energies on raising money for AIDS research, in loving remembrance of her good friend, Rock Hudson. When Elizabeth Taylor lives and loves, even if only platonically (hello, too, Michael Jackson), she always gives it everything she's got!



FOR "Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf," Taylor aged herself to look like a sour, matronly vixen.

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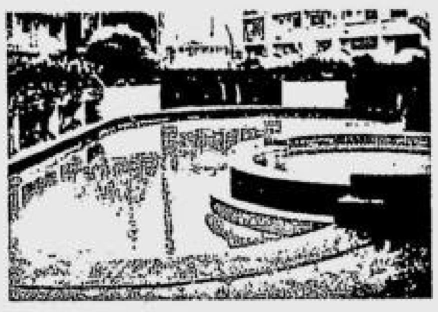

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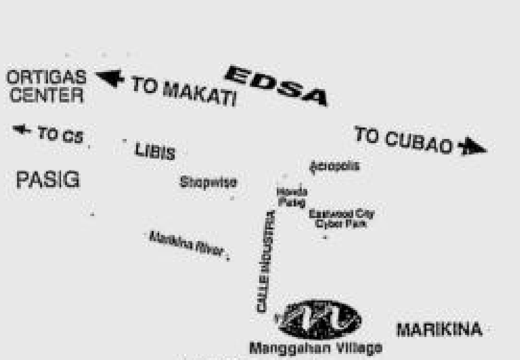

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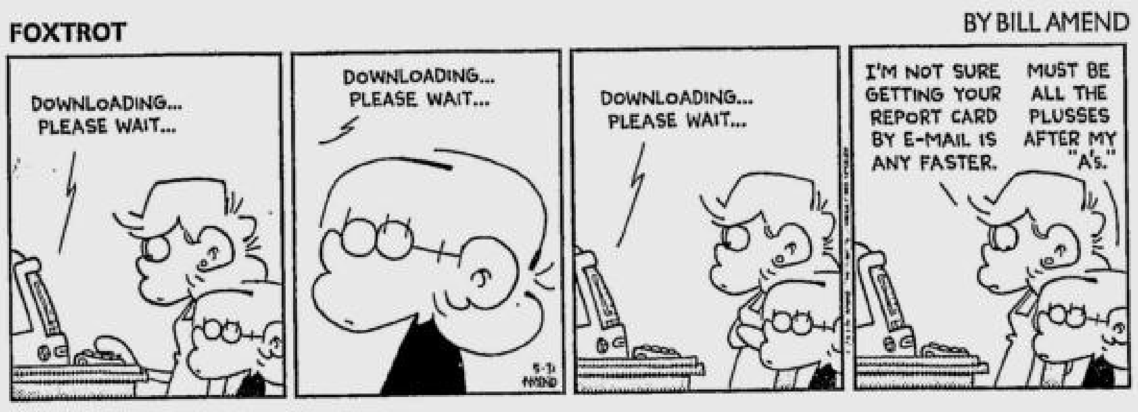
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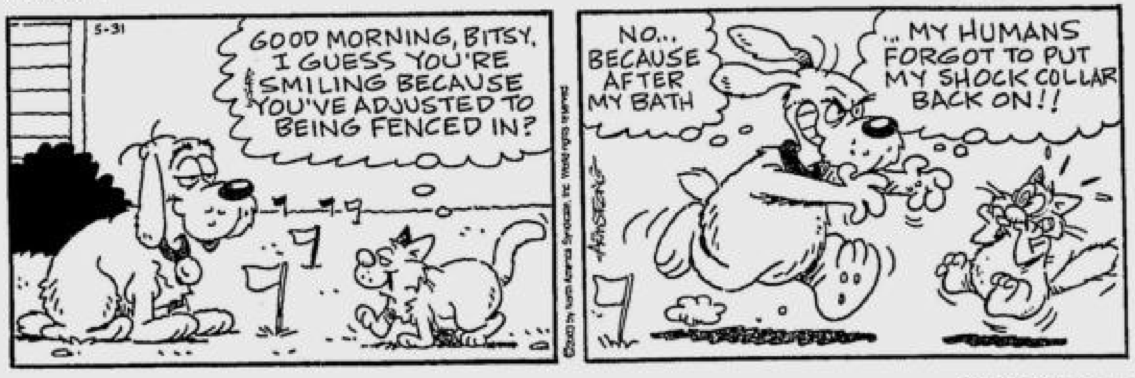
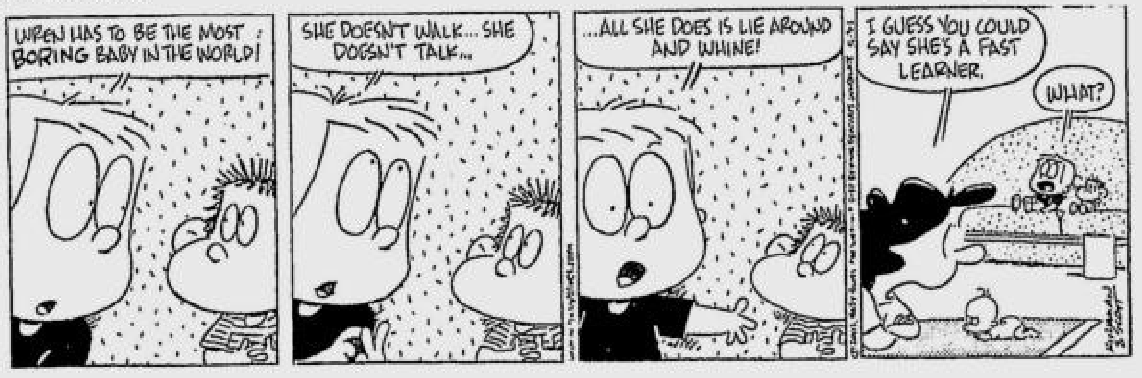
MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


5-31
GOOD MORNING, BITSY. I GUESS YOU'RE SMILING BECAUSE YOU'VE ADJUSTED TO BEING FENCED IN?
NO.. BECAUSE AFTER MY BATH
... MY HUMANS FORGOT TO PUT MY SHOCK COLLAR BACK ON!!

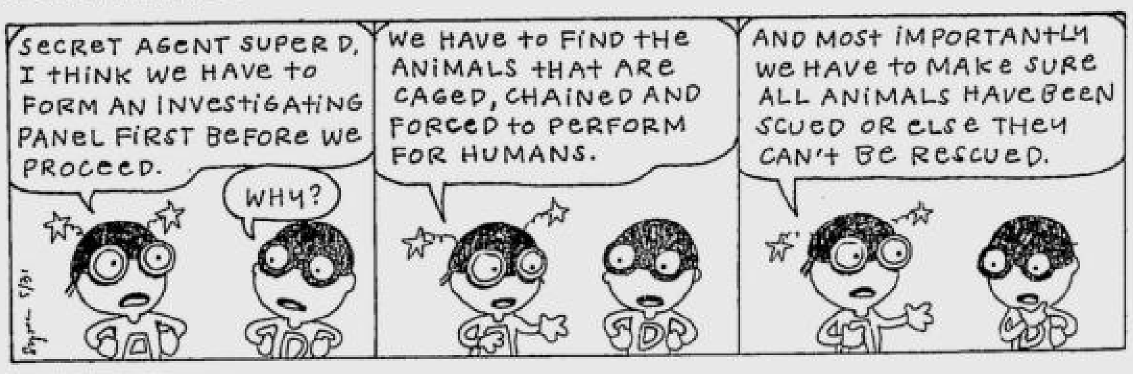
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


WREN HAS TO BE THE MOST BORING BABY IN THE WORLD!
SHE DOESN'T WALK... SHE DOESN'T TALK...
...ALL SHE DOES IS LIE AROUND AND WHINE!
I GUESS YOU COULD SAY SHE'S A FAST LEARNER.
WHAT?

ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


SECRET AGENT SUPER D, I THINK WE HAVE TO FORM AN INVESTIGATING PANEL FIRST BEFORE WE PROCEED.
WHY?
WE HAVE TO FIND THE ANIMALS THAT ARE CAGED, CHAINED AND FORCED TO PERFORM FOR HUMANS.
AND MOST IMPORTANTLY WE HAVE TO MAKE SURE ALL ANIMALS HAVE BEEN SCUED OR ELSE THEY CAN'T BE RESCUED.

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You're straightforward, no-nonsense and quite powerful. That's because you are capable, pragmatic and adaptable. Since you're also quick-thinking, you miss nothing. You often assume an outer mask to hide your soft, sympathetic side. You are interested in many things. This year brings a major change in your life—but a positive one. Birthdate of: Brooke Shields, actress; Clint Eastwood, director/actor; Sharon Gless, actress.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Intense discussions with siblings and relatives might leave you in the doghouse. But anger serves no purpose other than to make everybody miserable. Chill out.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): You have an irresistible urge to buy something today. You feel you must act. If you can afford it, go ahead. If you can't afford it, do yourself a favor and resist this impulse.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): You feel strongly about practically everything today. Expect lively, animated discussions with partners or close friends. (Don't get too bossy.)

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): You believe you have a better way of doing things at work. Your method is superior, and you want others to follow it. (You can lead a horse to water, but you can't make him swim.)

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Discussions with friends, particularly a female, can be revealing and meaningful. You might discover something profound about yourself or someone else. Keep your ears open.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): It is wise to listen to what authority figures have to say today. These can be people ranging from your parents or teachers to your bosses or the police. Heads up.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): If there is any course of study that you wish to pursue, now is a good time to think about doing it. You realize that you want to know more about the world in general.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Today is an excellent day to think about what you really need in life to be happy. (Just the basics.) Work to fulfill these bottom-line needs.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Be patient dealing with partners and close friends today. If you listen carefully, you will learn something important. Later, you'll be glad you made the effort.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Anything that you do today to promote better organization at home or at work will make you happier. You want to get organized now.

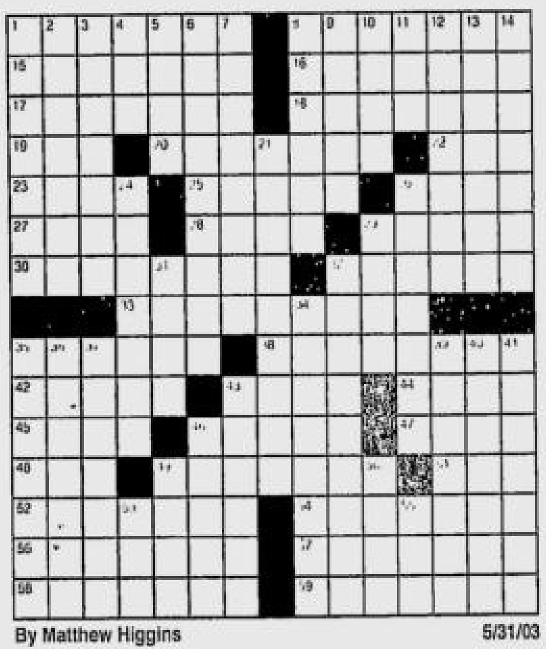
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): Romance and playful diversions are the first order of the day for you. You want to have fun! You want your life to be worthy of a juicy diary.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Plan to stay at home at some point today or this evening to enjoy family members and your own private world. You need to feel cozy and warm in your nest.

DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS
1 North African port
8 Makes current
15 Small crown
16 Superlatively artless
17 Venezuelan river
18 Edmonton's province
19 Puppy's bite
20 Slatted windows
22 Bad in Limousin
23 Words of understanding
25 Agenda topics
26 Occlusion of one's teeth
27 Gull relative
28 Camera eye
29 "Psycho" motel
30 Composition writer
32 Black or Sherwood
33 Commander in ancient Rome
35 Military identifier
38 Draws up plans again
42 Fencers' foils
43 Pugilist's weapon
44 Function
45 Finance
46 El __, CA
47 Mild oath
48 Most remote, briefly
49 Used mouthwash
51 Fitting
52 Fishing with a net
54 Upright
56 Expand
57 Furniture finisher
58 Pittsburgh pro
59 Timidity

DOWN
1 Wolfsbane
2 Slow-moving nocturnal primates
3 Constant complainers
4 Charged particle
5 Organic compound
6 Flinching
7 Resolute to the max
8 Deprives of weapons
9 Blanches
10 Claim to a share
11 Hail to Julius Caesar
12 Colonizing insect
13 Manors
14 Most hackneyed
21 Taking a risk
24 Made into law
26 Heart transplant pioneer
29 Ill-mannered one
31 Affirmative votes
32 Ides of March
34 Fidgety
35 Makes less dangerous
36 Affluent
37 Non-Jewish
39 Glacial deposit
40 Passes by
41 Bird dogs
43 Funny-money maker
46 Chronic canine malady
49 Lass
50 June 6, 1944
53 Highland negative
55 Come in first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By Matthew Higgins
Concord, NH

5/31/03

Friday's Puzzle Solved

A	M	I	D		A	T	M	S		P	A	G	A	N
M	E	R	E		S	H	I	P		O	L	L	I	E
M	O	O	N	S	H	I	N	E		S	L	I	D	E
O	W	N		H	O	R	D	E		I	O	T	E	D
			C	A	R	D		D	R	A	F	T		
S	A	L	O	M	E		S	T	A	G		E	L	I
P	R	I	C	E		M	E	R	G	E		R	O	N
R	I	G	A		C	O	L	A	S		S	A	G	A
A	S	H		C	H	I	M	P		B	E	T	O	N
Y	E	T		L	I	S	A		P	R	A	I	S	E
		M	E	A	N	T		H	U	I	T			
P	E	E	L	S		E	C	O	L	E		T	I	C
A	N	A	I	S		N	E	W	S	F	L	A	S	H
N	O	L	T	E		E	L	I	E		A	X	L	E
E	S	S	E	S		R	T	E	S		V	I	E	W

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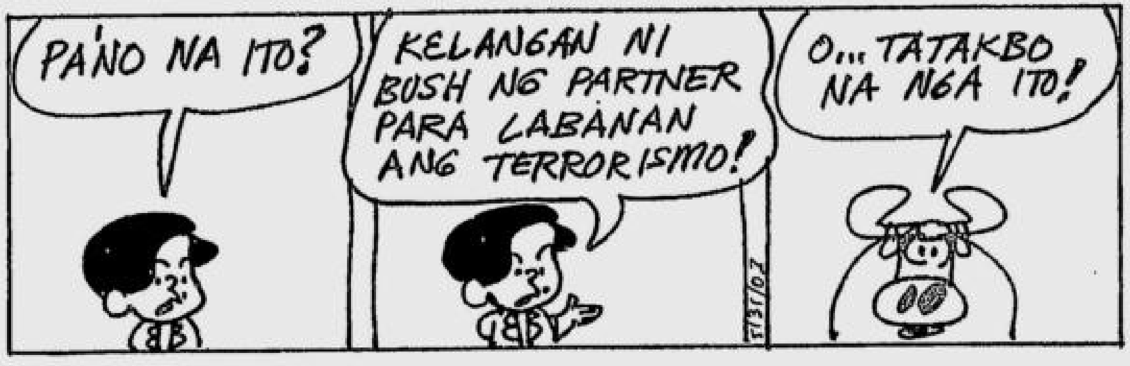
5/31/03

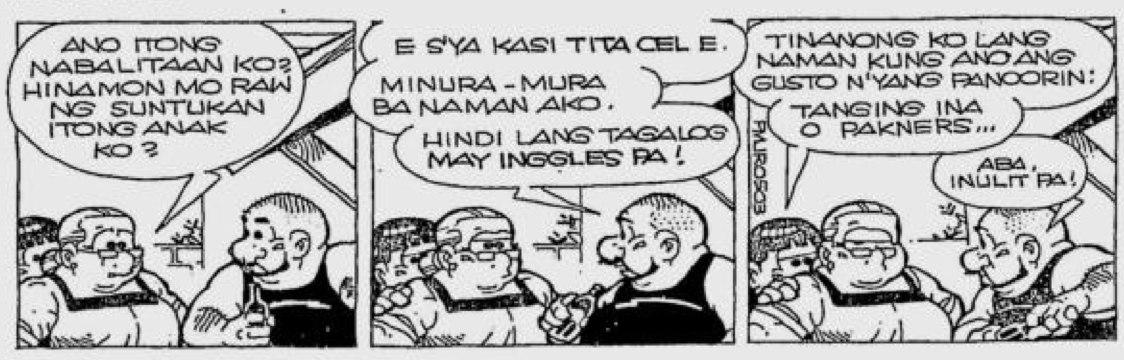
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


PA'NO NA ITO?
KELANGAN NI BUSH NG PARTNER PARA LABANAN ANG TERRORISMO!
O... TATAKBO NA NGA ITO!

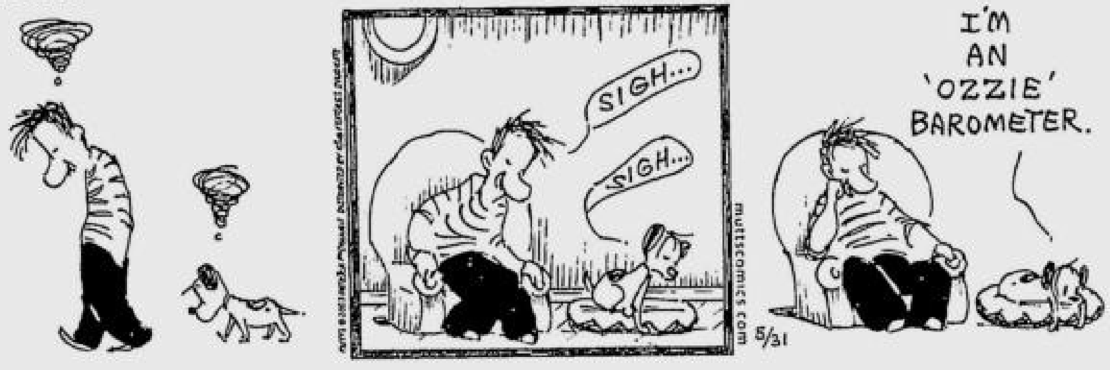
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


ANO ITONG NABALITAAN KO? HINAMON MO RAW NG SUNTUKAN ITONG ANAK KO?
E S'YA KASI TITA CEL E.
MINURA-MURA BA NAMAN AKO.
HINDI LANG TAGALOG MAY INGGLES PA!
TINANONG KO LANG NAMAN KUNG ANO ANG GUSTO N'YANG PANOORIN:
TANGING INA O PAKNERS...
ABA, INULIT PA!

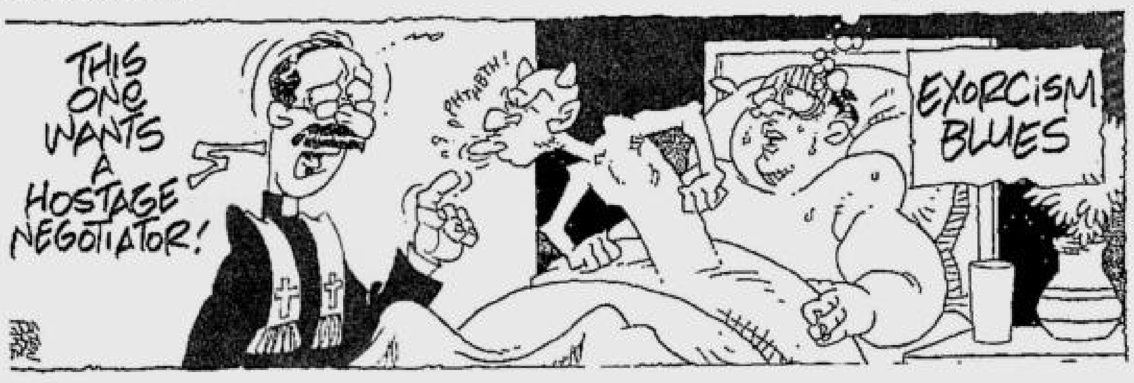
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


SIGH...
SIGH...
I'M AN 'OZZIE' BAROMETER.
muttscomics.com
5/31

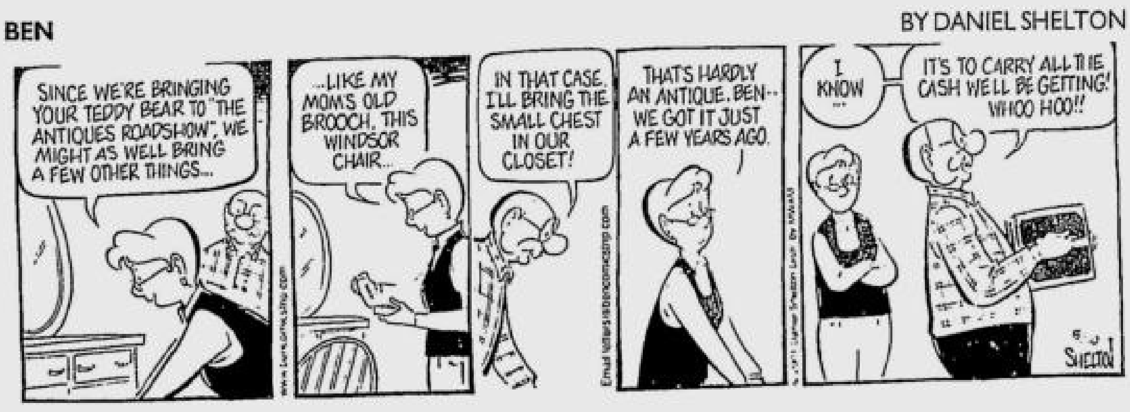
DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


THIS ONE WANTS A HOSTAGE NEGOTIATOR!
PHTHBTH!
EXORCISM BLUES

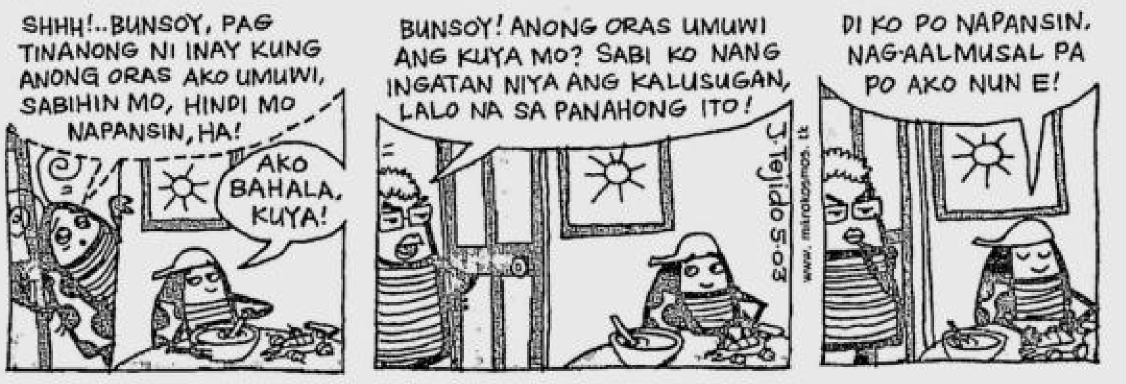
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


SINCE WE'RE BRINGING YOUR TEDDY BEAR TO "THE ANTIQUES ROADSHOW", WE MIGHT AS WELL BRING A FEW OTHER THINGS...
...LIKE MY MOM'S OLD BROOCH, THIS WINDSOR CHAIR...
IN THAT CASE, I'LL BRING THE SMALL CHEST IN OUR CLOSET!
THAT'S HARDLY AN ANTIQUE, BEN-- WE GOT IT JUST A FEW YEARS AGO.
I KNOW ...
IT'S TO CARRY ALL THE CASH WE'LL BE GETTING! WHOO HOO!!
SHELTON

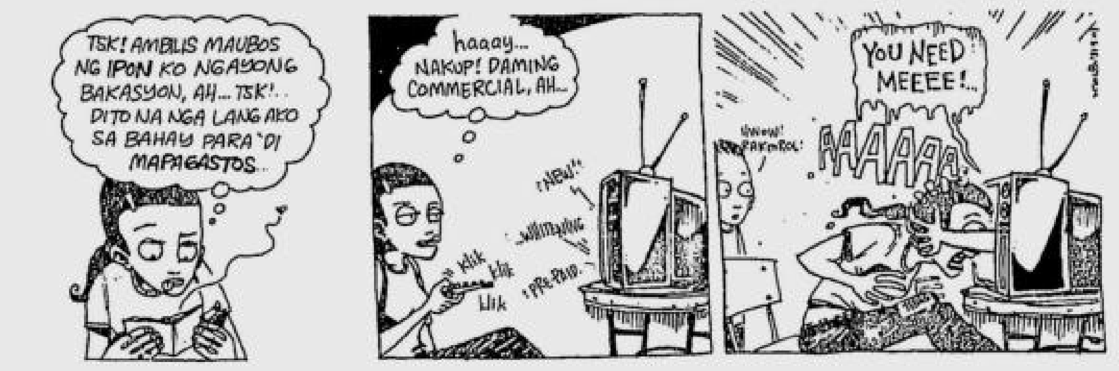
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


SHHH!..BUNSOY, PAG TINANONG NI INAY KUNG ANONG ORAS AKO UMUWI, SABIHIN MO, HINDI MO NAPANSIN, HA!
AKO BAHALA, KUYA!
BUNSOY! ANONG ORAS UMUWI ANG KUYA MO? SABI KO NANG INGATAN NIYA ANG KALUSUGAN, LALO NA SA PANAHONG ITO!
J. Tejido 5-03
www.mikrokosmos.tk
DI KO PO NAPANSIN. NAG-AALMUSAL PA PO AKO NUN E!

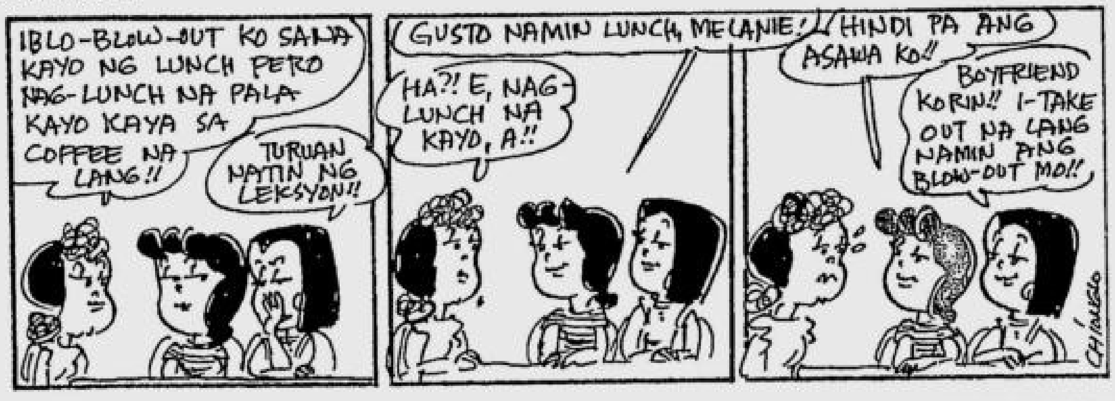
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


TSK! AMBILIS MAUBOS NG IPON KO NGAYONG BAKASYON, AH... TSK!.. DITO NA NGA LANG AKO SA BAHAY PARA 'DI MAPAGASTOS..
haaay... NAKUP! DAMING COMMERCIAL, AH..
NEW!
klik
klik
klik
YOU NEED MEEEE!..
AAAAAA

LOVEKNOTS

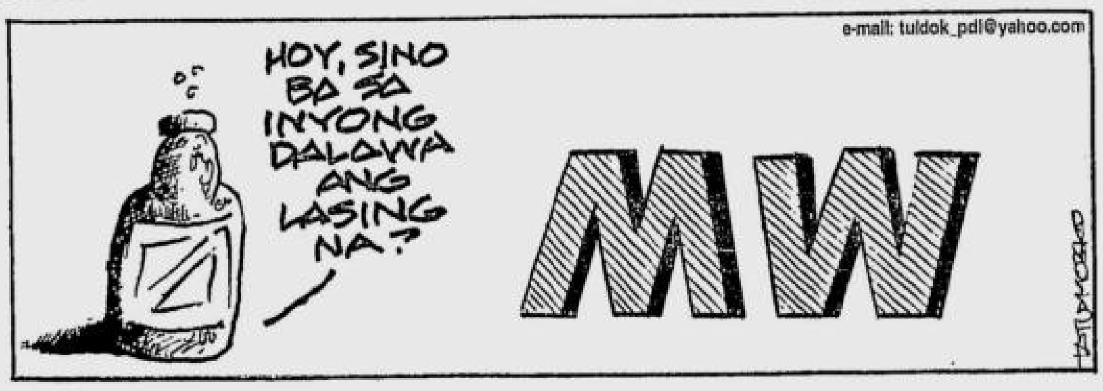
BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


IBLO-BLOW-OUT KO SANA KAYO NG LUNCH PERO NAG-LUNCH NA PALA KAYO KAYA SA COFFEE NA LANG!!
TURUAN NATIN NG LEKSYON!!
GUSTO NAMIN LUNCH, MELANIE!
HA?! E, NAG-LUNCH NA KAYO, A!!
HINDI PA ANG ASAWA KO!!
BOYFRIEND KO RIN!! I-TAKE OUT NA LANG NAMIN ANG BLOW-OUT MO!!
CHIONGLO

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING

e-mail: tuldok_pdl@yahoo.com


HOY, SINO BA SA INYONG DALAWA ANG LASING NA?
MW

Kate Hudson proves she's more than just her mother's daughter

SHOW BIZ Q & A

Rito P. Asilo

OUR Q and A this week:

From Queenie Sarmiento of Mandaluyong: "I had great fun watching 'How to Lose a Guy in 10 Days.' I know Matthew McConnaughey can turn on the charm when he wants to. But it was Kate Hudson who surprised me with her beauty and performance in the movie.

"She reminds me of Julia Roberts, and even her mom Goldie Hawn. Is it true she was originally tapped to play the female lead, instead of Jennifer Connelly, in Ang Lee's upcoming superhero saga, 'Hulk'? Why did she reject the role?"

Kate Hudson isn't Goldie Hawn's daughter for nothing. But if she has an advantage over her superstar mom, who gained fame portraying lovable but somewhat ditzy characters, it is her versatility to essay varied roles in different genres.

Enviable genes

Other than her enviable genes, she obviously possesses qualities not unlike those that catapulted Julia Roberts to the top of Hollywood hierarchy: a winning smile that can light up a room, a solid work ethic and undeniable talent.

This early, she has already won a Golden Globe, among a slew of other critics' citations, for her career-making turn in Cameron Crowe's "Almost Famous." Her character, Penny Lane, was originally intended for Sarah Polley. When Polley backed out of the movie for another project, Crowe considered scrapping the film altogether.

Hudson, who had been cast in a smaller role, begged for a chance to read for the part. Cameron was impressed and Kate got the role.

She has also appeared in "Gossip" (with James Marsden); "Dr. T and the Women" (with Richard Gere) and "About Adam" (with Stuart Townsend), shown here last year.

HUDSON. Her smile can light up a room.

Offer

No, she was not asked to do Jennifer Connelly's character in "Hulk." The offer was for the role of Peter Parker's girlfriend, Mary Jane, which landed on Kirsten Dunst's lap, in favor of "The Four Feathers," with Heath Ledger.

She may have lost the Spidey franchise but this had not stopped her from getting interesting offers and huge paychecks (she got $4.5 million for "How to Lose a Guy in 10 Days").

She married "Black Crowes" frontman, Chris Robinson, on Dec. 31, 2000. In Premiere's 2003 100 Most Powerful People list, she is the youngest (24) power player, and one of only 12 actresses in the list, at No. 99.

(Other women in the list, where Steven Spielberg is *numero uno*, are: Julia Roberts (16); Nicole Kidman (31); Reese Witherspoon (32); Jennifer Lopez (47); Cameron Diaz (48); Drew Barrymore (55); Renee Zellweger (63); Sandra Bullock (66); Angelina Jolie (67); Jodie Foster (94) and Halle Berry (96). Mom Goldie isn't even in it.

From Fiona Perez of Makati: "Is it true JC Chasez is also going solo like his N'Sync bandmate, Justin Timberlake?"

Yes, although that was not the initial plan. While other N'Syncers pursued solo projects (Justin with his solo debut, "Justified"; Joey Fatone with his Broadway stint in "Rent" and his supporting role in "My Big Fat Greek Wedding; Lance with his Nasa space launch), JC hooked up with movie/music producer Dallas Austin to record a single track for the soundtrack of the movie, "Drumline," starring Nick Cannon, Zoe Saldana and Orlando Jones.

Fusion

But he immensely enjoyed the product, "Blowing Me Up (With Her Love)," a respectable fusion of dance, electronica and R&B music (think Jordan Knight's "Give It to Me" in acid). So, he eventually recorded four songs that may end up on his highly-anticipated solo endeavor.

On his website, www.onlyartist.com, JC says he wants to do an album with "fun, fast-paced songs and mid-tempo ballads," with tunes influenced by the music of George Michael, Seal, Jamiroquai, Michael Jackson and Prince. Collaborators, other than Austin (TLC, Madonna, Boyz II Men), include BT (Sarah McLachlan, Tori Amos) and Rodney Jenkins (Britney Spears, Whitney Houston).

Currently laying down the finishing touches of the album for a possible July release, he is thinking of calling it either "Schizophrenic" or "The Truth," two of the cuts from the compilation.

Video shoot

When asked by a writer from "Access Hollywood" on the set of the video shoot of "Blowing Me Up" (which utilizes some cars from the "Mad Max" movies) if he was dating "American Pie" star, Tara Reid, he said, "Oh geez. No, she's my buddy. We just hang out because we really get along well."

Does he want to make movies? JC's answer in an MTV interview: "It's an option but at the end of the day, I want to be in the studio recording songs. I look myself in the face and go, 'You can do TV shows, but remember that's not what you do for a living, dude.'"

What great acting is all about

By Nestor U. Torre

SO you want to become a great actor? Here's how, from the best in the business:

John Gielgud

"All acting should be character acting. Study your role from the inside. Develop an understanding of the atmosphere of the script and the background of your character, from which you can build your performance outwards so it comes to life naturally, in proper relationship to the other characters, under the control of the director.

"Of all the arts, acting must be the least concrete, the most solitary. One gains experience from one's fellow actors and audience—they are the living canvas upon which one hopes to paint the finished portrait one has envisaged. With their shifting levels of reaction, the actor may hope to improve his performance, keep it flexible and fresh."

Laurence Olivier

"Acting is the art of persuasion. The actor persuades himself first, and through himself, his audience. For this you need observation and intuition. The actor is important as the illuminator of the human heart—as important as the psychiatrist, the doctor and the minister!

"To be successful in a role, the creative actor should try to look and sound unlike any other actor attempting to portray it. I do this by collecting a lot of keenly observed details, and then fashioning an original character out of all of those details.

"The great actor needs to be supremely confident in his ability to create a unique person. This is a little like the power of hypnotism. And teamwork with your fellow actors is a great essential. Actors must absolutely love each other to come up with a memorable performance.

OLIVIER. Acting is the art of persuasion.

"And you all must share humility towards the work. Supreme confidence and humility—that's an equation very difficult to achieve."

Paul Scofield

"Acting is a constant communication between thinking and feeling. Otherwise, the performance doesn't take shape, it doesn't work right. One's voice follows the rest; it somehow becomes a willing instrument in the totality of your characterization."

Richard Boleslavsky

"An ideal actor has to combine in himself these qualities: Talent. An apt mind. Education. Knowledge of life. Observation. Sensitivity. Artistic taste. Temperament. Voice. Good enunciation. Expressive face and gestures. Well-built body. Dexterity. Plasticity of movements. Tenacity in work. Imagination. Self-control. Good health.

"He must develop his spirit, intellect and body. For his spirit, he has to train his will power to the point of becoming master of his soul. This can be achieved by developing a quality known as Spiritual Concentration.

"He has to make his spirit sensitive and flexible by developing another quality known as Spiritual or Affective Memory. And he has to educate his spirit in order to make it strong and healthy in feelings. This is accomplished by daily exercise on the 'fulfillment of spiritual problems.'

"To develop his intellect, he has to educate his artistic taste and sensitivity by frequent contact and study of all works of art. He must increase his knowledge of life by constantly training his observation. And develop in himself the faculty of imagination.

"Finally, for the development of his body, the actor must train his voice by vocal exercises; his body by dancing, fencing, different kinds of sports, and by control of his muscles; his face by make-up; and his speech by diction and enunciation. He must also develop in himself the art of inner and outer mimicry and incarnation."

Batch 2003 photoworkshop

STREET SMART

Mandy Navasero

EVERY summer, I get a good batch of photo enthusiasts. This summer I have 14 students who are always talking a lot among them about what they love—photography.

Attitude

You can always count on them. What stands out most is their attitude: a refreshing and enthusiastic outlook shared by each and everyone in taking beautiful images in black and white.

In the workshop, they are given a real-world experience in photography: the Laguna Loop where they are tasked to bring home an "Amorsolo"-like picture. On breaks at Caliraya, we had David lecturing on digital photography. Prof. Eric Torres, former Ateneo Art Curator and English lecturer, gave a talk on "Photographic Composition," with winning images as visuals. Bob Razon, 90, dean of portraiture in the Philippines, shared his good business sense in the operation of a photo studio.

We shot the colorful *kiping* (rice wafers dyed in attractive shades) at the "Pahiyas" in Lucban, Quezon and proceeded to Ugu Bigyan's pottery studio in Tiaong, Quezon.

Medical mission

On May 17, Batch 2003 covered the Zonta Club Manila III medical mission "Operation Tule" in Baliuag, Bulacan as part of their photojournalism assignment. From there, we moved to Calaba, a small town in San Isidro, Nueva Ecija whose hardworking lady mayor is a civil engineer, Sonia Ramoso-Lorenzo.

They were also observers at the fashion shoot of Malanie Marquez by the seawall. At the time Melanie was posing, she was timing her contractions. Her sixth child, a boy, was born the next day!

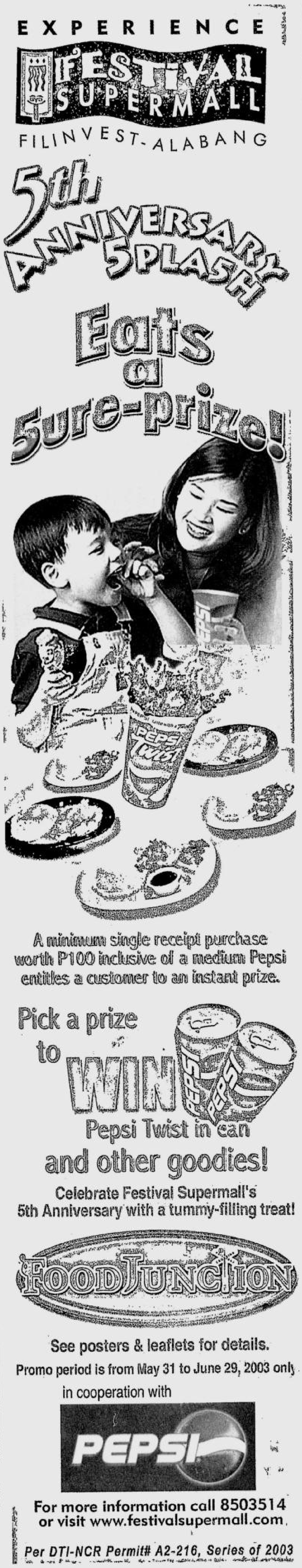
From May 23 to 26, we were scheduled to shoot in Sagada. One of the students, Frederick Longid, arranged for everything. Unfortunately, his father, Frank Irenaeaus Omengan Longid, chairman of the Board of Trustees of Trinity College of Quezon City, died in Germany while on a medical check-up for prostate cancer.

On May 28, relatives and friends from Sagada and Bontoc honored him throughout the night with rhythmic chanting.

This brought us to IRRI in Los Baños to take

BATCH/14

AT ST. JEROME Church are (from left, front row) Gregg, Amanda, Mary Ann, Cecil and Pinky. Second row, David, Liz Reyes, Hans, Derek, Dr. Candy Sia, Kelly, and Joyce. Behind are Corinna and Mandy.


EXPERIENCE
FESTIVAL SUPERMALL
FILINVEST-ALABANG
5th ANNIVERSARY SPLASH
Eats a Sure-prize!
A minimum single receipt purchase worth P100 inclusive of a medium Pepsi entitles a customer to an instant prize.
Pick a prize to WIN Pepsi Twist in can and other goodies!
Celebrate Festival Supermall's 5th Anniversary with a tummy-filling treat!
FOOD JUNCTION
See posters & leaflets for details.
Promo period is from May 31 to June 29, 2003 only
in cooperation with
PEPSI
For more information call 8503514 or visit www.festivalsupermall.com
Per DTI-NCR Permit# A2-216, Series of 2003

Gus Van Sant wins top prize at Cannes Film Festival

VAN SANT. His winning film is about a fictional shooting at an American high school. REUTERS

By Angela Doland

CANNES, France—Director Gus Van Sant's "Elephant," an intimate look at the victims and killers in a fictional shooting at an American high school, won the top prize at the Cannes Film Festival.

Well-received

The film was well-received, though the victory was something of a surprise. The French Riviera festival's 12-day lineup was considered the weakest in recent memory, and many critics favored Lars von Trier's dark, challenging drama "Dogville," which did not win any prizes.

Van Sant, best known for "Good Will Hunting," loosely based some aspects of his film on the 1999 massacre at Columbine High School in suburban Denver.

For Van Sant, the film harks back to the small, lower-budget movies he once made, like "My Own Private Idaho." He shot the film in just 20 days and cast real high school students, not actors.

The movie starts out showing an ordinary school day, with students gossiping in the cafeteria, playing football or working in the photography lab. The end is stunning and graphic: Two students go on a shooting spree in the hallways.

Surprised

The American director looked surprised as he accepted the Palme d'Or, saying "Vive la France!"

While newspapers have given lots of attention to school violence, "drama is an area that we're not supposed to really be talking about such things, because it is such a large problem," Van Sant said.

The title, "Elephant," refers to the old expression about a problem that's as easy to ignore as an elephant in the living room.

"It's easier to leave it sleeping and not aggravate it," he said.

The director was the first American to take the Palme d'Or since Quentin Tarantino won for "Pulp Fiction" in 1994. Van Sant also won the prize for best director.

"Uzak," (Distant), a slow-moving Turkish film about a jobless man from the countryside who irritates his sophisticated city cousin by moving into his apartment, won the Grand Prize, or second place.

The film's two stars, Muzaffer Ozdemir and Mehmet Emin Toprak, shared the award for best actor. They played the two cousins—both lonely and alienated, but unable to become friends.

Director Nuri Bilge Ceylan cast two nonprofessional actors to star. Toprak, his cousin, died in a car crash just after learning that the film was selected for Cannes; Ozdemir, an old friend, restores buildings for a living.

French-Canadian film

The screenwriting prize went to Denys Arcand for the French-Canadian film "The Barbarian Invasions." Arcand also directed the film about a womanizing university professor who confronts death with humor and sharp intelligence. The movie had many viewers wiping away tears.

Marie-Josee Croze, who plays a young drug addict recruited to supply the dying man with heroin to ease his pain, won the award for best actress.

The Jury Prize went to "At Five in the Afternoon," by 23-year-old directing prodigy Samira Makhmalbaf of Iran. The movie—her third to show in Cannes—is about a spirited young Afghan who dreams of being her country's first woman president. Many of its scenes have a haunting beauty, showing the country's ruined palaces and rocky deserts.

"Reconstruction," by Denmark's Christoffer Boe, won the Camera d'Or, an award for the best film by a first-time director, while the prize for best short film went to Australia's Glendyn Ivin for "Cracker Bag."

Along with "Dogville," which stars Nicole Kidman, another film overlooked for prizes was Clint Eastwood's "Mystic River," a crime drama about three childhood friends brought together years later by a murder. Appearances by Eastwood and Kidman were among the highlights of the festival, which drew fewer stars than in recent years.

Out of competition

Van Sant has never had a film compete at Cannes before, though "To Die For" showed here out of competition in 1995.

"Elephant" offered a very different take on school violence than Michael Moore gave in "Bowling for Columbine," a hit at Cannes last year. Moore's film searched for the roots of violence in America by looking at everything from school shootings to racism to the National Rifle Association.

Van Sant doesn't offer any reasons for why school violence happens; he just presents it, and leaves it to viewers to think about.

A few details were based on the Columbine massacre, when gunmen Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold killed 13 people and then turned their guns on themselves. In one scene, one of the young killers stops in an evacuated cafeteria and sips from a glass—an image also captured on Columbine's surveillance cameras. *AP*

Batch . . .

From page I3

pictures for the photo exhibit at the Ayala Museum, now located at the ground floor of the old Makati Stock Exchnage along Ayala ave. Date of opening to be announced later.

Our students:

- Cecile Gamboa-Bacolod, 38, six months pregnant.
- Fr. Gregg L. Bañaga, 39, an administrator at Adamson University with a keen sense of humor.
- Joyce Yu-Chua, 37, housewife.
- Mary Ann Go-Di, 33, housewife, has been shooting for 22 years.
- Raymund D. Generoso, 30, single, is GMA-7 TV director for "I-Witness."
- Pinky Rodriguez-Go, 32, housewife, has a photo assignment from Baby Magazine.
- Kelly S. Lim, 25, single, a stock analyst, is a magna cum laude graduate of economics from the University of California-Irvine.
- Frederick F. Longid, 27, single, is a member of the UP Taekwondo Varsity Team.
- Jovit R. Morando, 28, runs his own business and currently studies law at Ateneo Rockwell.
- Amanda C. Navasero, 12, Grade VI, took up Creative Writing at St. Scholastica's College this summer.
- Maria Cecilia P. Ravelas, 29, single, is an interior decorator and a director of the Pila Conservation Society.
- Corinna Mutuc-Sarmiento, 47, is married to the congressman from Davao.
- Hans-Juergen Springer, is a retired ADB economist and engineer who has been dabbling in photography for 45 years.

Family picture promo

Family Picture Promo at 50 percent is a hit so the studio is extending it, to enable families to acquire high-quality pictures. Call 522-5189 or 522-1905.

Class of 2003 photo by Hans J. Springer. Photographing a woman winowing are (from left) Pinky Go, Joyce Chua, Mary Ann Di, Fr. Gregg Bañaga, Cecil Bacolod, Mandy Navasero, Corinna Sarmiento, Derek Longid and Kelly Lim.

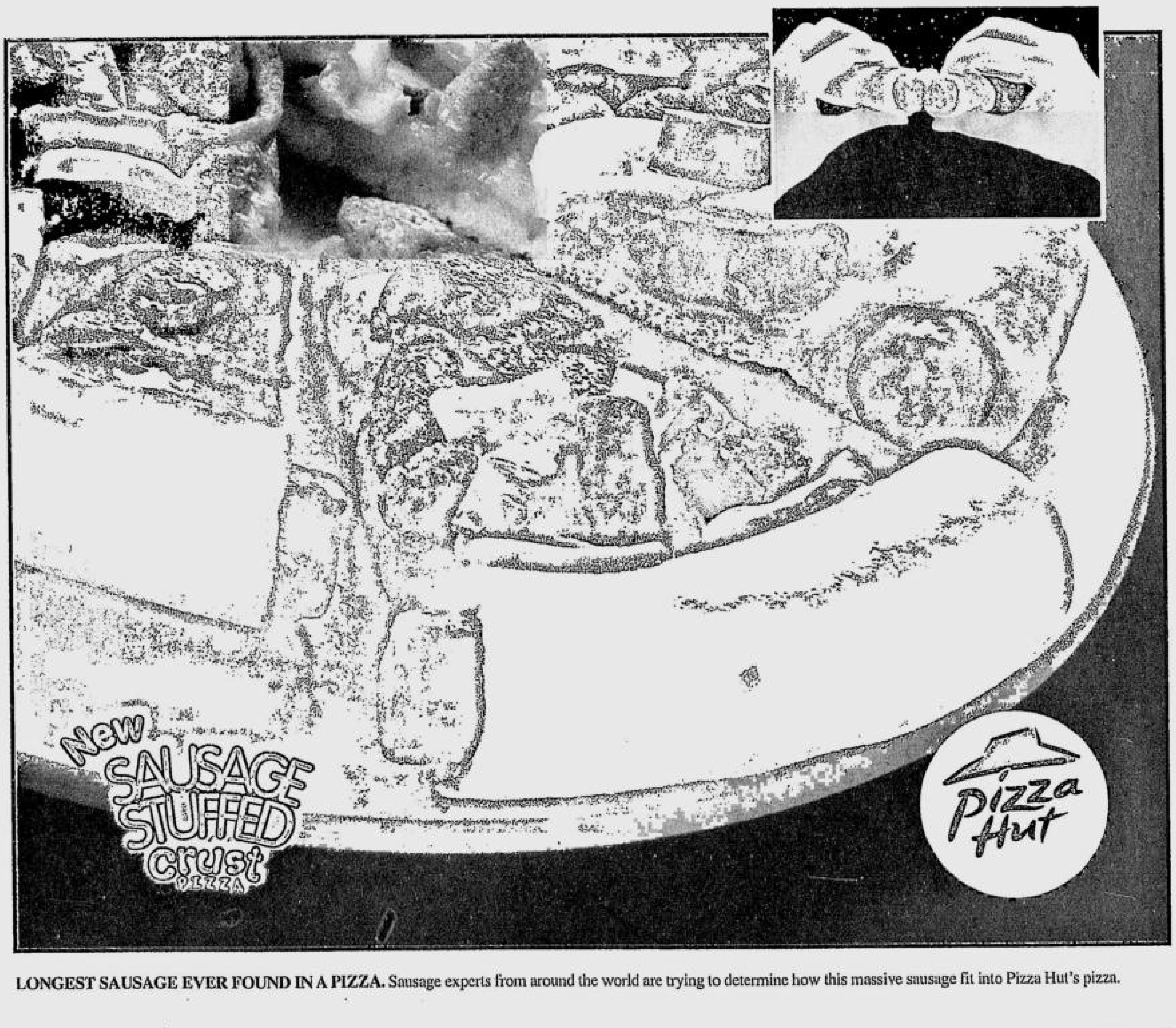
MARCH 2003

Elvis seen in Pizza Hut.
Story on page A2

News hot off the grill!
DAILY PIZZA TRIBUNE

Man weds pizza in Vegas ceremony.
Story on Page A5

THREE-FOOT LONG SAUSAGE STUFFED INTO THE CRUST!



LONGEST SAUSAGE EVER FOUND IN A PIZZA. Sausage experts from around the world are trying to determine how this massive sausage fit into Pizza Hut's pizza.

A three-foot sausage was found stuffed inside the crust of a Pizza Hut pizza by a customer this morning. The man could barely contain his excitement as he tried to describe what happened.

"I bit into the crust and my mouth was filled with sausage!"

The man claims his life has been changed, and wants to help others share the same experience.

The Sausage Stuffed Crust Pizza is causing a sensation throughout the Philippines and the world. People are flocking to Pizza Hut restaurants to catch a glimpse of it, and hopefully, sink their teeth into it.

How such a marvel of pizza engineering was achieved continues to baffle people. Pizza Hut has remained tight-lipped about its meaty master-piece. A company representative, speaking on conditions of anonymity said, "I can't tell you how we did it, but let's just say, when we stuff something, we put our heart and soul into it."

Another employee, beaming with pride, said "mankind built the pyramids, split the atom, landed on the moon, and now he's managed to stuff a three-foot long sausage into a pizza crust. That's the stuff of legends!"

When it comes to stuffing pizzas, Pizza Hut remains the undisputed champion of the world. First, they stunned us by stuffing their crusts with cheese, then with pepperoni & cheese and now they knock us out with a three-foot long sausage.

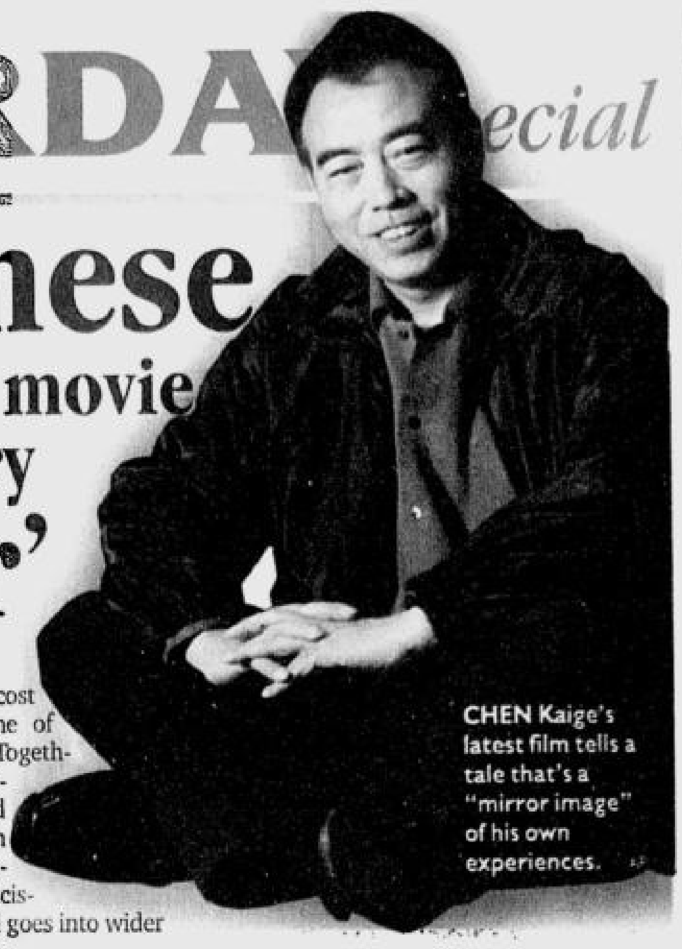
Consumer are enjoined to go to the nearest Pizza Hut and try the amazing Sausage Stuffed Crust pizza: Others may also call 911-11-11 to order this sausage and pizza sensation!

What will they think of next?

* 3-foot sausage applies to family size pizza

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Leading Chinese filmmaker's new movie brings his life story 'Together'



CHEN Kaige's latest film tells a tale that's a "mirror image" of his own experiences.

By Martin Steinberg

NEW YORK—Chen Kaige endured soul-searing experiences during China's Cultural Revolution: He was caught with forbidden Western classical recordings, forced to denounce his father and was sent into the jungle to perform hard labor.

Top student

Chen, one of China's leading filmmakers, was a top student at age 14 when he succumbed to the pressure of communist authorities seeking to root out ideologically impure citizens in the mid-1960s.

In an interview with The Associated Press, the director of the 1993 film "Farewell, My Concubine" recalled standing in front of 500 people at a "struggle session" and announcing that his father, himself a filmmaker and former Nationalist, was not a faithful Maoist.

"I did terrible things to my father because I didn't really have any choice," said the 50-year-old Chen, one of the leaders of China's "Fifth Generation" filmmakers. "I'm not trying to prove I was innocent, because Chinese culture is literally very different from here. You have to prove you are faithful to your society by doing terrible things sometimes. Otherwise, you'll be out of your society."

Success at any cost is the main theme of Chen's new film, "Together." The movie, distributed by United Artists, opened in New York, Los Angeles and San Francisco last May 30 and goes into wider US release in June.

Skyscrapers

The film, in Mandarin with English subtitles, is set in contemporary Beijing. Hulking skyscrapers, modern shopping malls and other signs of consumerism—symbolized by ubiquitous cell phones—are taking over the ancient landscape and values.

The story parallels Chen's relationship with his father, only in mirror image.

In the film, the father—Liu Cheng (portrayed by Liu Peiqi)—is the driven one. He yearns for his shy, 13-year-old son, Xiaochun, to become a renowned violinist.

Liu brings Xiaochun from the countryside to Beijing, searching for a top teacher who can help the boy win big competitions. Liu eventually finds Professor Yu (played by the director), an icy, unscrupulous taskmaster willing to sacrifice his students on the altar of vanity. *AP*

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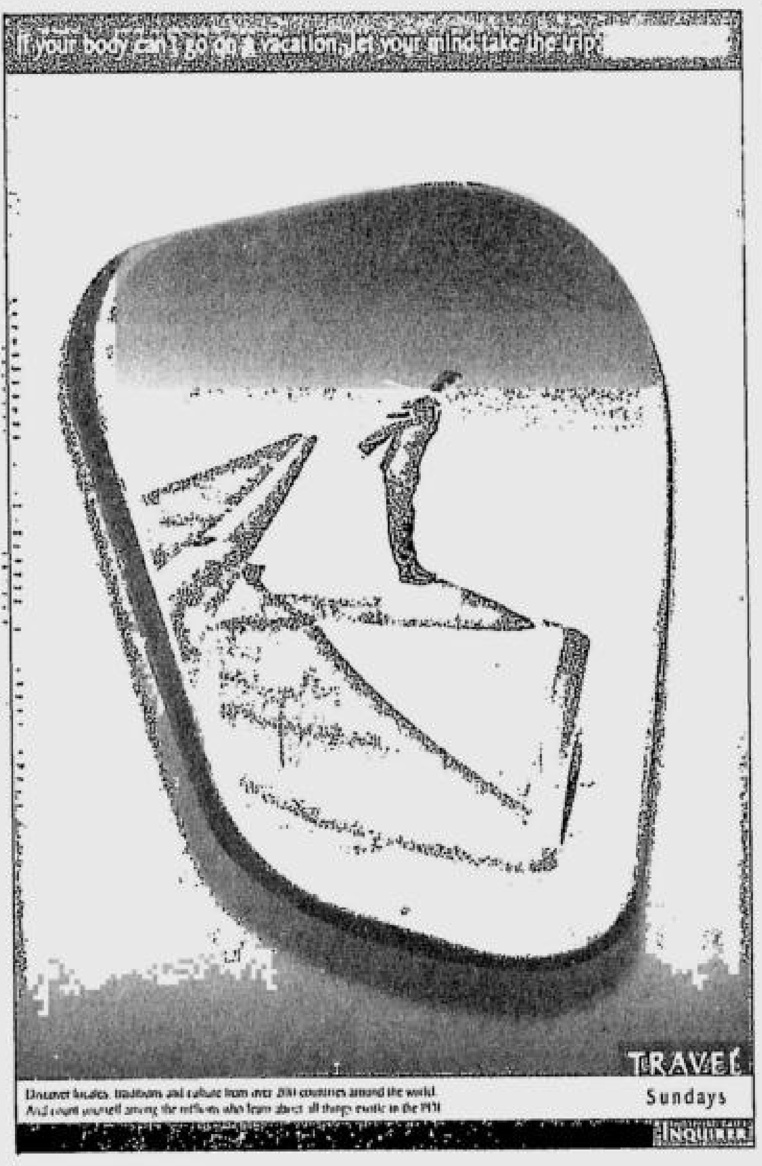

TRAVEL
Sundays
INQUIRER

One out of 4 senior citizens is malnourished.¹

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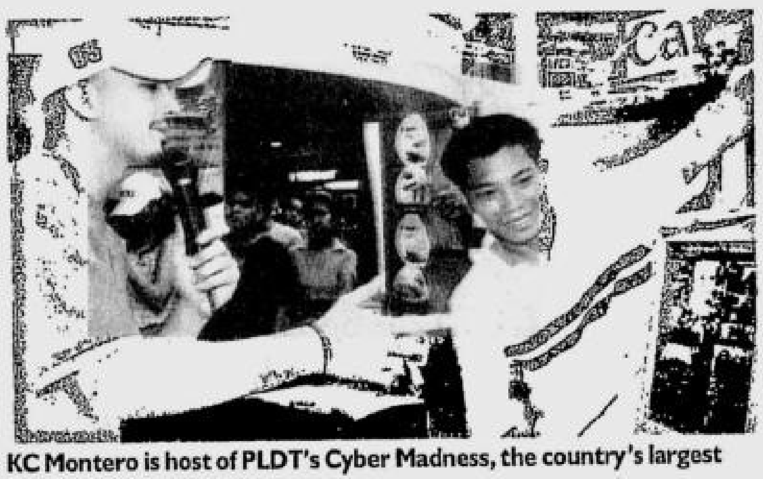
THE "CLICK" *barkada* explore the multi-player online game "Oz World."



KC Montero is host of PLDT's Cyber Madness, the country's largest PC-Internet festival.

Bacharach's musical muse performs in Manila

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

WOULD songsmiths Burt Bacharach and Hal David have become as famous as they are now if they didn't have Dionne Warwick for their musical muse, and as interpreter of their songs? Not likely. When Bacharach met Warwick in 1961, he had already been collaborating with David for four years, but they had yet to come into their own as top composers and lyricists.

Warwick, who was only 17 at the time, provided the missing magic ingredient that they had been looking for, because her sinuous voice effectively jibed with baion, the Latin American rhythm that Bacharach was fond of using.

Between 1963 and 1971, the singer and her dashing songwriters had 33 US chart entries, many of which became pop classics—"Always Something There to Remind Me," "Walk On By," "You'll Never Get To Heaven," "Trains and Boats and Planes," "Say A Little Prayer," etc.

Warwick also got to sing the themes of films like "Alfie," which became hits in their own right.

The musical trio's classics have been revived time and again by other artists, but it took the film "My Best Friend's Wedding" and its revival of "I Say A Little Prayer" to get younger music buffs interested in and fascinated by the famous musical collaborators' body of work.

The result: Warwick has become famous all over again, fully 40 years after she first clicked with music fans. That's why her concert tonight at the Aliw Theater at the CCP complex is expected to draw, not just her original, now mature fans, but also new, younger admirers, who have belatedly been bewitched by the legendary singer and her signature songs. Tickets at Ticketworld and TicketNet, or call Star City at 832-6121 and 22.

Movies on TV

On the Cinemax channel: Sunday, June 1 at 9 p.m, "Head Over Heels." 3:15 a.m., "Up Periscope." Monday, June 2 at 6:30 a.m., "A House Divided." 7 p.m., "The Flintstones in Viva Rock Vegas." 5:30 a.m., "Cinema Secrets: Animals Gone Wild."

Tuesday, June 3 at 1:55 a.m., "The Guns of Navarone." Wednesday, June 4 at 6:45 p.m., "Cinema Secrets: From Comics to Cinema." Thursday, June 5 at 2 p.m., "Cape Fear." Friday, June 6 at 6 a.m., "The War of the Worlds." 12:45 p.m., "The Day the World Ended."

On HBO: Sunday, June 1 at 6 a.m., "Journey to the Center of the Earth." 1 p.m., "Philadelphia." 10:15 p.m., "The Majestic." Monday, June 2 at 6:30 a.m., "Meatballs." Tuesday, June 3 at 11 a.m., "Radioland Murders." 1 p.m., "Almost Famous."

Wednesday, June 4 at 2 :15 p.m., "Spies Like Us." 4 p.m., "Coneheads." Thursday, June 5 at 1 p.m., "Hostage Negotiator." 1 a.m., "For Love or Country: A True Story." Friday, June 6 at 6 a.m., "Real Genius." 3:30 p.m., "Roxanne."

'Angels' on Cinema One

Ellen Ongkeko's "Angels," starring Gina Alajar and Noni Buencamino as a blind couple, will be screened on Cinema One at 4:30 p.m. on June 4, 6:30 p.m. on June 8, and 2:30 p.m. on June 28.

Cyber Madness

A surge recently rocked Ayala Center when Cyber Madness PC Internet Festival hit the mall with explosive performances from exciting artists Akafellas, Radha, Passage, Manoeuvers, and 17:28. Coupled with incredible deals on desktop computers and laptop packages, Glorietta Activity Center was the place to be for the hip, young set wishing to stay connected in today's wired world.

The "Click" *barkada* tried out PLDT Vibe's Instant Messenger powered by Chikka Txt at different booths. The TV teens also explored Oz World, which features rich 3D environments, combining chatting with real-time network gaming.

The Talk 'N Text basketball team gamely posed for photos and signed autographs. The PBA stars then tested their skills on the virtual hardcourt as they played NBA live online.

Mini-concerts featured crowd-pleasers like the Passage Band and Radha.

Hosts KC Montero and Apollo Abraham presented the Akafellas. Although the vocal group is relatively new, the fellas caught the attention of shoppers by introducing the audience to the pop capella genre.

WARWICK. Magic ingredient.

BUENAVENTURA. Violin virtuoso.

Aside from the demonstrations of Vibe, myDSL and Hype services, dealers offered loaded computers for less than P15,000, zero interest for 12 months with Citibank Paylite. PLDT Cyber Madness hits SM Megamall until June 1, and SM City North Edsa on June 13-15.

Violinfest to honor Rizalina Buenaventura's legacy

The former students of Prof. Rizalina Buenaventura, in cooperation with Equitable PCI Bank and MCO Foundation, present an afternoon of violin music celebrating the 85th birth anniversary of the Philippines' first woman violin virtuoso. The concert will be held at Francisco Santiago Hall on Sunday, June 1 at 4 p.m., and is free to the public.

A protege of the late Ernesto Vallejo (the country's first violin virtuoso), Rizalina Exconde Buenaventura is a Battig Music Circle awardee for pioneering in the development of chamber music in the Philippines. She also led the only all-women orchestra in the country, organized by National Artist Dr. Lucresia Kasilag and founded the Manila Philharmonic Orchestra together with her late husband, National Artist Col. Antonio Buenaventura, which launched the career of then prodigy Cecile Licad.

All former students and colleagues of Prof. Exconde Buenaventura are asked to contact 0918-5583262 and 725-2268. Francisco Santiago Hall is at Equitable PCI Bank Tower 1, Makati ave.

Celebrity Pop Quiz

What do celebrities Rufa Mae Quinto, Richard Gutierrez, Michael V, Chynna Ortaleza, Wendell Ramos, Francis M., Bryan Revilla and Maureen Larazabal have in common? They will be testing homeviewers' brain power on "Digital LG Quiz."

Have your cell phones ready when the stars dish out trivia questions with four answers to choose from on the quiz show's Celebrity Pop Quiz portion starting this Sunday, June 1.

Homeviewers must text in the correct answer in this format, iPlayTQ<letter of the correct answer>, and send it to 2344 (for Globe) or 4627 (for Smart and Talk N' Text). The first three homeviewers who text in their answers within the designated time frame will win cash prizes and special gift packs.

"Digital LG Quiz" airs every Sunday, 9 a.m. to 10 a.m. on GMA-7, with Paolo Bediones and Regine Tolentino as quizmasters, and is produced by Alta Productions Group, a subsidiary of GMA-7.

Masses for Manny Pichel

Friends of the late, well-loved writer-editor Manuel "Manny" Pichel are invited to attend masses today commemorating the first anniversary of his death.

Masses will be celebrated at 7 a.m. at the San Miguel Pro Cathedral; and at 6 p.m. at the Santuario de San Antonio in Forbes Park, San Sebastian Church, Holy Infant Jesus Parish Chruch in South Admiral Village in Parañaque, and the Immaculate Conception Cathedral in Zamboanga City.

The pious reader is requested to say a prayer for Manny Pichel, our dear friend whom we all miss so much, a full year after he left us.

Schwarzenegger may consider running for California governor

RADNOR, Pennsylvania—Arnold Schwarzenegger says he may think about running for California governor after the summer release of his new movie, "Terminator 3: Rise of the Machines,"—but his family will have a say in the matter.

Close friends

"When I get to that point that I say, 'I want to run,' I will have that conversation with my family and with my close friends," Schwarzenegger told TV Guide for its May 31 issue.

He said the advice of his wife, NBC News correspondent Maria Shriver, a member of the Kennedy family and a Democrat, will be especially significant.

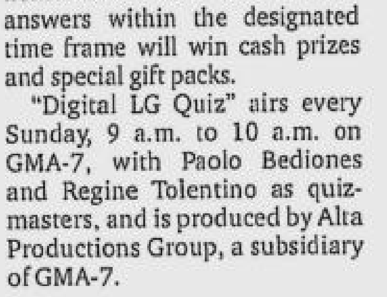
"She has to give the green light and feel comfortable with it because she moved away from Washington to get away from all that kind of stuff," Schwarzenegger said.

Republican

"I'm not thinking about it (now), but I might start thinking about after "Terminator 3" is released," said Schwarzenegger, a Republican. He says the movie is his top priority for now.

"So much has to be done for marketing, publicity, commercial tie-ins, and the merchandising," he says.

AP



SCHWARZENEGGER. His wife's advice will be expecially significant.

MTV 2003 awards night to be held at LA's Shrine Auditorium

THE BIGGEST names in film and music will gather for the much-awaited 2003 MTV Movie Awards on May 31st at Los Angeles, USA's Shrine Auditorium.

Touted as the wackiest, most high-flying film competition, the MTV Movie Awards is presented by Globe Gentxt.

Four winners

A series of free screenings was held locally at The Fort to add excitement to this year's awards night. Globe Gentext also concluded a promotion wherein four winners (Zelyn Ramos, Teresa Tinamisan, Matilde Loyola and Arnie Gil Hordejan) each received a free trip to LA and the chance to watch the 2003 MTV Movie Awards live!

Heading the list of nominees are "Spiderman" and "The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers" with five nominations each.

"Spiderman" is vying for the Best Movie, Best Male Performance (Tobey Maguire), Best Villain (Willem Dafoe-Green Goblin), Best Kiss (Tobey Maguire and Kirsten Dunst); and Best female Performance (Kirsten Dunst) awards.

Categories

"The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers," meanwhile, is fighting it out in the following categories: Best Movie; Best Male Performance (Viggo Mortensen); Best On-Screen Team (Elijah Wood, Sean Astin and Gollum); Best Action Sequence (The Battle for Helms Deep); and Best Virtual Performance (Gollum).

Hosted by NSync's Justin Timberlake and actor Sean William Scott, this year's awards show has for its theme the high-flying concept of the butt-kickers like Yoda, Austin Powers, Spiderman and Jinx.

Tune in to MTV Philippines (Channel 41) for the telecast of the 2003 MTV Movie Awards on June 14 at 2 p.m. and on June 15 at 9 p.m.

Had I known...

FACE TO FACE

Inday Badiday

DEAR Clara,

It must have been the rain. Or the melancholy that came with the dying of summer. Or the albums of faded photographs of not so faded yesteryears that I caught myself leafing through, one profoundly boring afternoon.

More thoughtful

Whatever it was, I've found myself more thoughtful these past days about the things in my life I'd prefer to have gone the other way, had I known what I do now about living and believing, about loving and being loved, about tears and laughter and the many, little choices and decisions that inexorably divide them.

Yes, Clara, I have a few regrets in my life. They don't hurt as much anymore but they still occasionally bring me pain—and I'd like to share them with you as part of the healing process I should go through, and also to light your own path through life's many twists and turns.

First and foremost, I shouldn't have thrown my marriage away. Early on in life, I should have learned the value of forbearance and generosity of spirit. I should have been more giving. And forgiving. I should have fought more for the love that I fought my parents for. I should have defended that love more and my pride less against the vicissitudes that, after all, beset all marriages.

Total commitment

Yes, Clara, I should have offered total commitment to my marital vows—and seized the problems that besieged my marriage as opportunities to prove and strengthen that commitment, instead of as little hammers that whacked at and weakened the foundations of my relationship with the person I swore before God to love forever.

I've come to realize the essential value of marriage now that I'm old enough to face my own ghosts. Sometimes, during family reunions, as I sat alone in a quiet corner pretending to be happy, I'd throw a moist eye at the bliss that colored the smiles of your aunts and uncles with their children and their children's children—still together as one family, joyful and triumphant against the many odds I once argued were reasons enough to break them apart.

Sometimes, too, in the dead of night, a flash of lightning followed by a roll of thunder would wake me up and I'd be afraid. I'd search inside the covers for a hand I could clasp, but there'd be nothing there. I'd wrap myself more tightly inside the comforter that could not comfort me, and I'd sink my face into the pillow that now served as the repository of the remains of the marriage I had frittered away.

Choice of friends

I should have been wiser in my choice of friends. I shouldn't have left the door of my life always ajar for everyone to enter and leave as they pleased. I should have given more respect to myself—by seeing through the elaborate sham some people put up to camouflage the vested interests they had in seeking my friendship.

Dearest child, double is the pain from the wounds inflicted by the betrayal of treacherous friends—and I've lived to bear the agony of this truth. At the height of the success with which the Lord once crowned my efforts, I was never without the company of friends. But in the depths of the trials that God saw fit to prune me with, I was alone —and friendless except for the very few, good men and women who stood by me.

If I were a tree, summers found me filled with leaves and all kinds of birds nesting in my branches. But the winters left me forlorn, cold and all alone.

Now, Clara, winter is over, spring and summer are at hand, and there are birds—old and new—hovering around.

Milk and honey

Another thing, precious child: I should have been more of a mother and less of a bank account to you, my children. Indeed, during that time of plenty, when milk and honey seemed to flow endlessly, I lived to give you the best of everything—not realizing that what you needed was the best of me. I poured out to you everything that money could buy—and it was like candy. It gave you sugar—which made you fat but not strong and healthy. And it ruined your teeth.

It's a good thing, my dear Clara, that you've turned out the most unspoilt. That must be because as you were growing up, autumn has come and, during the long winter, I was able to hold you close to me, to nourish and nurture you with my presence—something I had neither the time nor the compulsion for during the growing-up years of your older siblings.

I should also have taken better care of my money—and of the business, too. I should have studied the ins and outs of everything I dipped my fingers into. And I should have known that wealth is not in the way one lives, but in the way one saves.

Trinkets

I should have invested more on the right things. For instance, I love traveling. But whenever I traveled, most of my time were spent on spending—shopping for trinkets and baubles and bric-a-brac for which I didn't really have a place in our house, but which I felt an overpowering compulsion to buy just the same. Instead of just malls and malls and even more malls, I should have visited old churches, museums, cultural icons and historical landmarks —which would have fed my spirit more.

It was an indulgent, materialistic life I led. And excessive, too. I shouldn't have lived such an extreme lifestyle. When I drank, I drank like a fish. When I ate, I ate like food would go out of fashion tomorrow. When I spent, it was like money grew on trees. And my body is now suffering because of all my excesses.

There's now something wrong with almost every vital part of my body—my heart, my kidneys, my pancreas, my liver, my blood. There are times when I think there's also something the matter with my brain! (Heaven forbid.)

You know what I've learned, Clara? We should not live life to the fullest so that we can live to have a full life. Everything in moderation, as Eddie Garcia would say.

Family

Another big regret I have, Clara, is that I should have been much closer to the family—especially to your Tita Letty, who's always been very caring of me, which I didn't quite have the sensitivity to fully appreciate before. I always knew she was special—but I never quite put a finger on the gift that she really is until now.

I should have talked with her more, called her up more often. I should have shared more moments with her—quiet afternoons at some bistro just for some girlish chats, or long walks to exchange stories about the smallest things.

I envy your Tita Letty for her deep faith in God. Before, I thought her relationship with the Lord was just one of her eccentricities. I mistook her being very prayerful for a cute idiosyncrasy. But now, I realize that her strength of character and spirit comes from it—and how I wish I could be as close to God as she is.

And speaking of God, dearest one, much earlier in my life I should have responded to His call to friendship and renewal, so I'd have learned what total surrender meant early on. Had I done that, I'd be leaping from glory to glory with Him by now.

Of course, regrets are such a waste of time. And we are not really in the blaming business. I guess, I should be more thankful and less regretful about how things have turned out in my life.

Like, had I stuck with my marriage, I never would have had you. Had I not gone through the toughest trials, I never would have unmasked the fiends cloaked in friends' clothes in my midst.

Well, things always work out for the best in the end—no matter how badly we've botched them up at the start. And we have our forever Friend up there to thank for that.

Focus on Cesar Montano

Tomorrow, on "Inday, Heart to Heart"—10:30 to 11:30 a.m., GMA 7—Cesar Montano retraces the circuitous path he took from anonymity to stardom.

Again, I'd like to express my thanks to the sponsors of the show—San Miguel Corp. (Coca Cola, Royal Tru Orange, Sprite, Lift and Viva Mineral Water), Samsung, Tender Bob's Steaks, Potion Planet, Home & Lifestyle, American Blues, Yamaha Clavinova, Celine and the Philippine Daily Inquirer.

Nyoy Volante rides the crest of the acoustic music trend

By Bibsy M. Carballo

PERHAPS it's the hard times, whose battle cry is "get the best for less." Perhaps it's a new appreciation of music, in the light of which vocal calisthenics are no longer the yardstick of a good singer. Whatever the reason, the time for acoustic performers has arrived, and they've become the trend of the moment.

Current craze

Nyoy Volante, Jimmy Bondoc and Paolo Santos are the current craze, and their performances with often only guitar accompaniment are being hailed as the latest in musicdom. Never mind that we have listened to Bayang Barrios and the singers at Hobbit House and Bistro '70 doing this for years. The audience has declared that this is a new form, and these names are the trendsetters.

VOLANTE (center, front) with his Mannos group.

No way is Nyoy an overnight success, however, although this may be the perception of many. Twenty-five years old and a graduate of De La Salle St. Benilde, Nyoy has been singing all his life, attending the Thelma Iglesias Music School even while at Malate Catholic Elementary, and the Yamaha School of Music while at Immaculate Heart of Mary High School. He garnered best singer awards from these schools, so there was no other career he was expected to tackle but music.

Bands

Eight years ago, Nyoy started joining bands (New Covenant, Twist of Fate, White Colony, Midnight Jams, Sundae Traffic); four years later, he wrote songs for the albums of Tootsie Guevara and Jubilee, recorded the Esperanza theme for "Mula sa Puso ni Esperanza," did session guitar for Viva Records; and in 2000 came out with his first self-titled debut album for Viva.

Somewhere along the way, Nyoy says, "I felt I needed something simple and uncomplicated yet still be able to perform for an audience, so I got a guitarist and started doing acoustics. After a year, I started playing guitar on my own and got a couple of other instrumentalists to back me up."

The group is called Mannos, and includes a guitarist, percussionist, and violinist. They are now so much in demand that there is hardly any time to rest.

Watching Nyoy and Mannos perform at Hard Rock Café recently, my companions and

NYOY/J4

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'Basta't Kasama Kita' has a bumpy start

PADILLA AND SANTOS. Play agents and reluctant partners in their new weeknight series.

By Noelani Torre

WE'VE never been a fan of local "bad boy" Robin Padilla, of "drama princess" Judy Ann Santos, or soap operas in general. So we weren't exactly waiting on tenterhooks for the new television series, "Basta't Kasama Kita" on ABS-CBN.

Curiosity

Nevertheless we do admit to a fair amount of curiosity brought about by the program's uncommon (for local shows, that is) premise. The show, which we hesitate to call a soap, centers on the lives of the characters of Padilla and Santos, who are agents (and reluctant partners) of the Eagles Task Force, some sort of crime-fighting NBI-ish body.

So, despite ourselves, we sat in front of the TV set, waiting for the first episode of "Basta't Kasama Kita" to air. It began umpromisinginly enough with a juxtaposition of the current activities of the two protagonists—he hotfooting after a bad guy, and she training for the Eagles.

Awkward

The chase scene went on interminably, with no exciting movements to liven it up, and Santos looked decidedly awkward in various athletic "training" shots. We have more patience for her, however, since she isn't exactly an action star like Padilla (whose scene was the worse of the two). Still, it would be a good idea for her to trim up a little in order for her crime-busting character to be more credible, not to mention less painful to watch.

The show capitalizes on the tension between the two leads brought about by their getting off on the wrong foot, and by a great deal of pride, injured and otherwise, on both sides. Padilla is Agent Katindig, a rehash of his signature smirking "macho" character, and Santos is the incongruously named Princess, a law graduate who decides to take up crime-busting to resolve some personal issues. She plays the educated rookie (bar exam top-tenner, no less) to his "street-smart" veteran.

There are many flashback scenes in this episode, meant no doubt to further establish the duo's characters, but which result primarily in creating a disjointed feel that doesn't help make the already problematic show more cohesive.

The bit where a young Princess is rescued from bullies by a young Katindig(with no irritating smirk, thank God) is a trite plot "twist" that could have been dispensed with, or at least given a fresher slant. They didn't actually reveal the boy rescuer's identity, but it was pretty obvious.

Sentimental

The happy family bits were also sentimental, and the fact that Princess' father (who might or might not be dead) used to be an Eagles agent is another overused device. It could have been revealed in later episodes, maybe, but this show, like most other local shows, seems to have a tendency to over-explain things.

Another gripe we have is about the two leads' mothers, who are both gratingly overplayed. The scene where Princess is berated by her mother for joining the Eagles is strident and overacted, though we must say that Santos is okay in that one. Katindig's mother, on the other hand, is cloyingly (and unbelievably) clinging to the point of being practically incestuous.

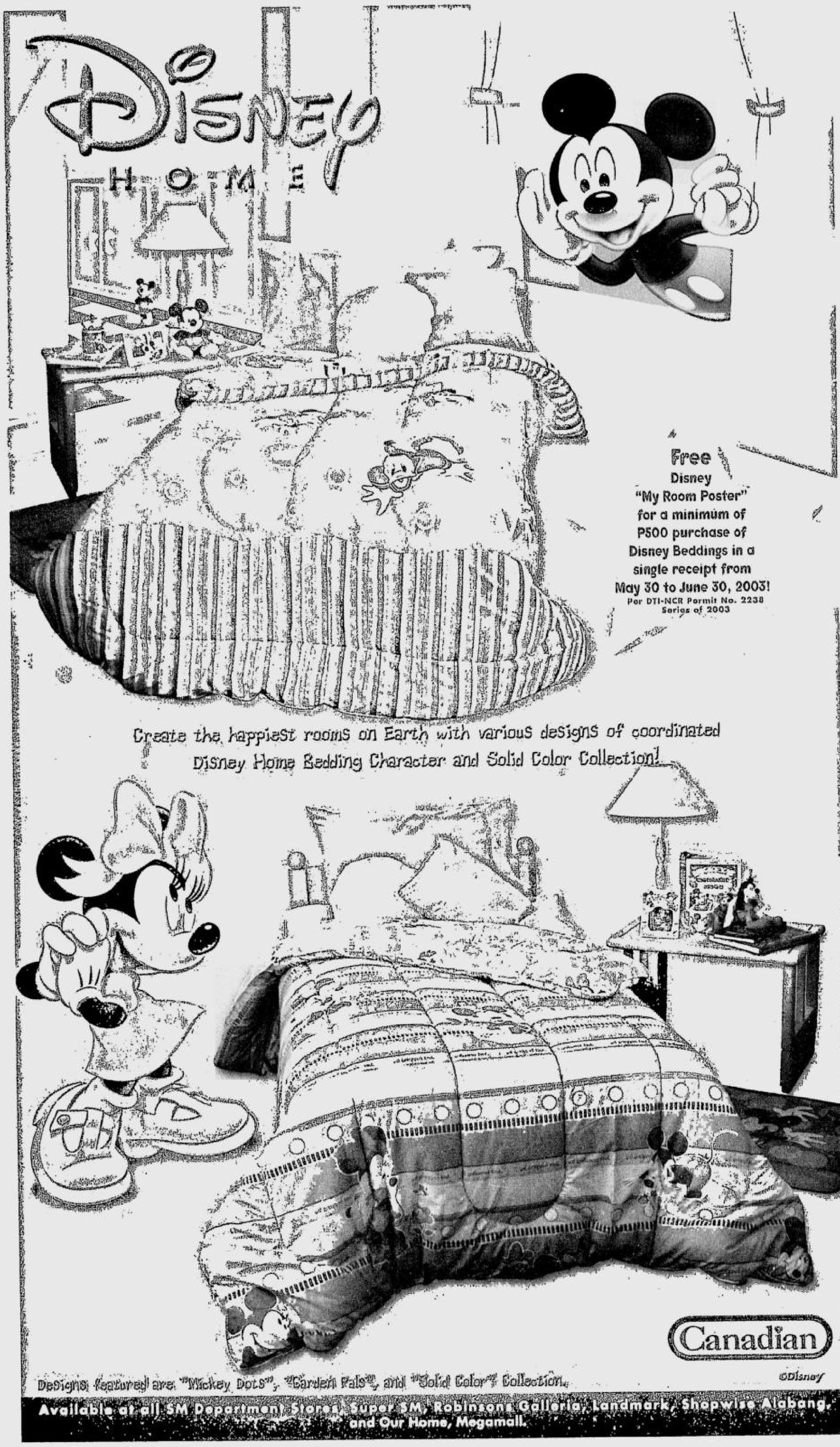
The show is more or less rescued by the humorous sparks that the two leads strike off each other. The scene where they first meet, discounting the childhood flashback, is when Katindig "borrows" Princess' vehicle in order to chase a suspect. He bodily moves her when she refuses, and she gives him a tongue-lashing when he finally returns the car. Her harangue, however, could have been better written.

Hostility

Their hostility towards each other is further heightened when, while chasing a suspect, she disobeys an order and thus allows the suspect, a middle-aged woman, to escape. Still, Katindig looks even more inept when the older woman overpowers him in a fight.

After watching the episode, we are reminded of the reasons why we never liked Robin Padilla or the roles he plays—he has an overbearing, macho attitude that will exasperate any intelligent woman, and a vastly annoying perpetual smirk that's just begging to be wiped off.

The idea of a soap opera with a comic action slant is intriguing enough, however, and we hope that the show's creative team can make adjustments in future episodes. A tighter script and snappier scenes could work wonders.



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Nyoy . . .

From page J3

I were one in declaring that here indeed was a performer with talent, not to mention good looks.

While regaling the audience with his repertoire of songs that went from country to rock, Nyoy also gave a sampling of his dexterity, not only as a guitarist but also at the keyboards, bass, and percussions. We also understand that he does painting, sculpting, light and sound design, direction, computer imaging, basketball, swimming, bowling, tennis, billiards—! Now, isn't that a little bit too much? No individual could be so blessed, we thought...

Gay lover

We had to be reminded that he was also some weeks back playing the role of Angel in the concert version of "Rent," the musical. As the gay lover of Michael de Mesa, Nyoy died of AIDS but not without touching the lives of the group of lost creatures he lived with, and his performance was outstanding.

We could hardly recognize Angel with the wig and the tutu outfit of "Rent" in Nyoy the acoustic balladeer—and isn't that exactly the test of a good performance? Nyoy has also done "Dreamgirls," "The Rocky Horror Show," "Kanser," and various plays in college. But while he enjoys these excursions into theater, he is primarily an acoustic balladeer.

Although he has gained the respect of his peers through some achievements (2nd placer lyricist, Voice of Asia Music festival 2002; Parangal ng Bayan Awardee, 2002; Awit awardee 2001; DECS Ten Outstanding Youths awardee, 2001; 3rd placer lyricist, Shanghai Music Awards, 2000), Nyoy has very simple wants, needs and goals in life.

Typical day

A typical day is spent at home with his parents in the morning, then sleeping after lunch until it is time for a performance. His goal is "simply to be at the same place where people I admire are, to work with them, and if possible be respected by them as an artist."

He has a strong faith in God, is a hard worker, plans to take further lessons in guitar playing, and vows to not forget the people who accompanied him on his journey to the top. He looks up to Gary V., Martin Nievera, Janno Gibbs, Stevie Wonder, Luther Vandross, Tuck Andress, and Joe Satriani.

His favorite quote is "Every gift has a responsibility attached to it;" and scriptural passage,". . . to be a man after my God's own heart who will fulfill my every wish."

For comments email bibsymcar@yahoo.com

Nationwide na kami!

Junior Inquirer Special

SATURDAY, MAY 31, 2003 ✦ 8 PAGES ✦ VOLUME 1, NUMBER 1

Hello World!

WELCOME to JUNIOR INQUIRER *Special*! This is the INQUIRER's monthly nationwide newsmagazine, made especially for inquisitive kids like you. You'll find us with your INQUIRER copy every last Saturday of the month. JUNIOR INQUIRER *Metro* will continue to be available to kids in selected Metro Manila schools the rest of each month. Here's more good news. We won the **Unicef Best Children's Newspaper** for the second year in a row! See the story on page 2.

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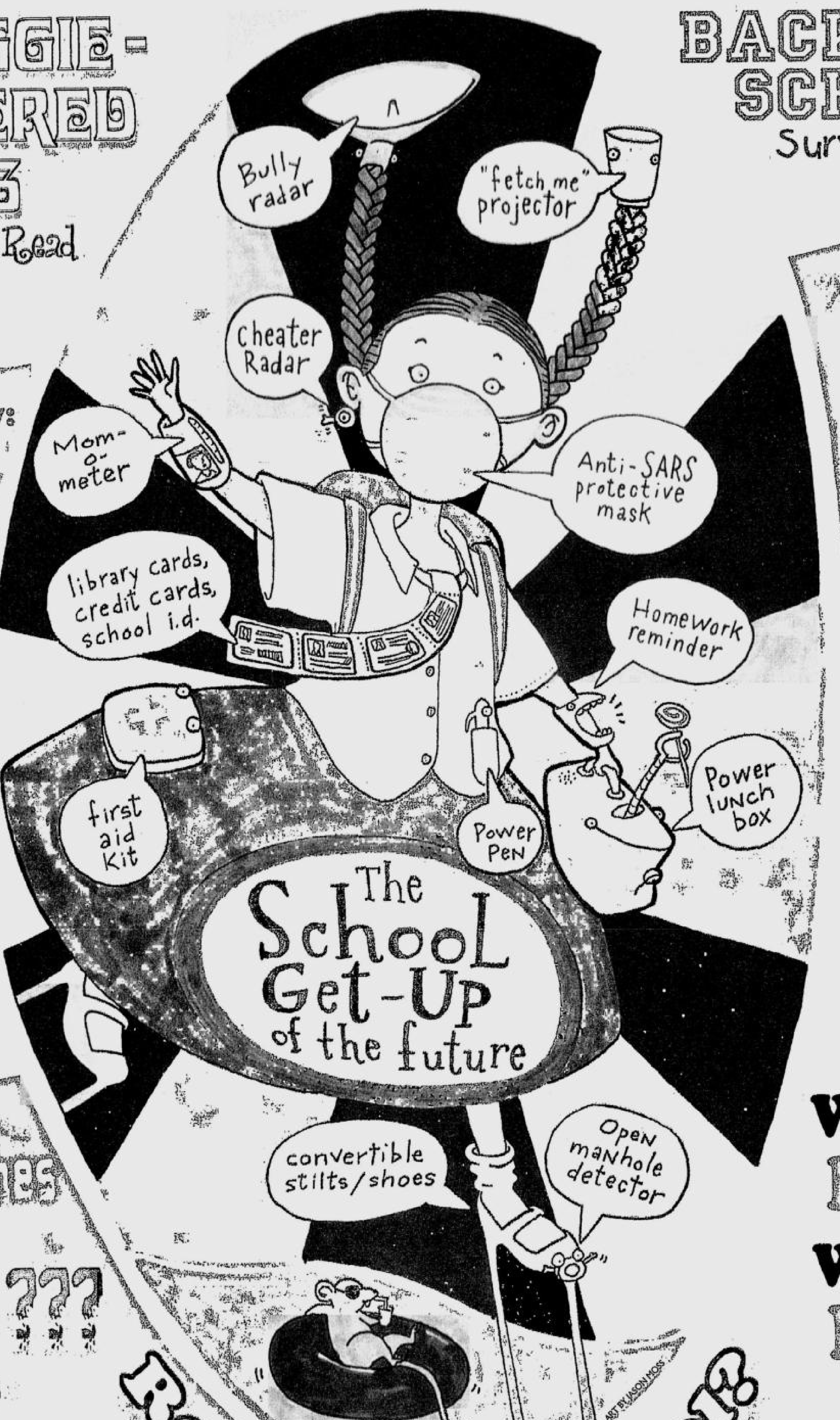
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Power lunch box
The School Get-Up of the future
convertible stilts/shoes
Open manhole detector
ART BY JASON MOSS

Ready for School?

By Eline Santos

JUST WHEN YOU thought you couldn't stand another boring day with nothing to do, it's time to go back to school!

Whoohoo! Nice, clean notebooks, plastic-covered textbooks, crisp new uniforms (or newly-washed hand-me-downs!) and shiny black school shoes! There's nothing like the smell of plastic cover! You get to have an allowance again.

Best of all, you are reunited with old friends and you get to make new ones.

JUNIOR INQUIRER wishes you a smashingly cool and absolutely adventure-filled new school year! Here's our survival guide to the first few days of SY 2003-2004!

Here comes the rain again...

Being ready for school again means being rain-ready too. Here's what you'll need to beat the showers.

SMALL WONDERS. Look for scrunch-able raincoats and tri-fold umbrellas if you're the type who always loses them. These will fit in your bag and can be ready any day. No need to second-guess PAGASA.

GET THE SIGNAL. Monitor the weather by radio, TV or by website. Check out www.pagasa.dost.gov.ph for the latest updates. Pop quiz: what does PAGASA stand for?

THE MAGIC WORDS. Don't jump for joy just yet. Tropical Storm Signal No. 1 means no class for pre-school kids. Signal No. 2 means grade school and high school kids stay home. Signal No. 3 means even college people won't have classes. It's a different story in Metro Manila though, where 3 hours of rain can paralyze the city—even if we're just on Signal No. 1. Stay informed and keep your parents' phone numbers ready, in case you'll need an early ride home.

H^2O-PROOF. Protect your books from heavy rains by lining your school bag with a plastic garbage bag. Or use one to cover your bag like a raincoat.

Missing Best Friend

What if your very best friend is in another section?

Ready/ p. 7

Junior INQUIRER Special

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THE JUNIOR INQUIRER SPECIAL is published by the PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER every last Saturday of the month. We accept poetry, short story, essay and art contributions for our For or By Kids section. Interested contributors should send a printed copy of the piece (double-spaced on letter-sized paper), along with a self-addressed stamped envelope to the Junior Inquirer Editor.

Letters to the editor may be sent to our e-mail address <ji@inquirer.com.ph>. Our office is at the Philippine Daily Inquirer Building, Chino Roces Ave. (formerly Pasong Tamo) corner Yague and Mascardo Sts., Makati City, Philippines, with telephone number 897-8808 local 340. Snail mail: P.O. Box 2353 Makati Central Post Office, 1263 Makati City, Philippines. E-mail: ji@inquirer.com.ph

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Child-Friendly Awardee
UNICEF-PPI CHILD-FRIENDLY NEWSPAPER AND JOURNALIST AWARDS

2003 Best Children's Newspaper Awardee

The Pinoy Kid's Newspaper

DEAR KIDS,

IN your hands right now is a very important issue of the JUNIOR INQUIRER. It's the very first issue of JI that is being distributed nationwide—that's why we call it Special. It will be read not only by kids in Metro Manila, but kids as far up north as the Batanes islands and as far down south as Jolo.

You may not have known it, but for the past eight years the tabloid-sized Junior Inquirer has only been distributed in Metro Manila. Kids who got copies in the provinces only got lucky if they found JI in their parents' copy of the Philippine Daily Inquirer. We've long since been receiving requests to go nationwide. But we had to do it a step at a time.

So here we are now! We'll be with you every last Saturday of the month—telling stories, sending you news about what kids all over the Philippines are achieving and talking about. We are YOUR newspaper! So help us do our job by sending us your literary works, your illustrations, your zany ideas and, of course, your suggestions on how to make Junior Inquirer Special a better newspaper for kids.

We have another bit of news that might get some of you upset though. The smaller-sized Junior Inquirer—now christened Junior Inquirer Metro—will now be sent directly to selected schools in Metro Manila for free. So you won't find these issues with the mother ship anymore. JI Metro will be sent to schools the first three or four weeks of each school month (remember, some months are five weeks long).

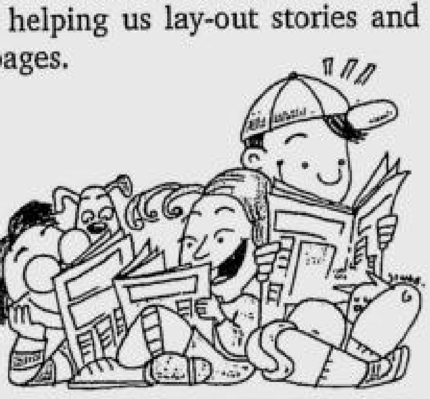
If your school isn't on our list, don't panic! All you have to do is get your school principal to write a letter of request to Mr. Donald Lim, the Inquirer's Assistant Vice President for Classifieds and Marketing. He'll be happy to hear from your school.

Do I hear groans and complaints from our grown-up readers? Well, to get a copy of JI Metro, you may have to come to our office or borrow a copy from a kid, hehe.

Before this editorial of mine gets any longer, we'd like to thank some friends who helped us put together JI Special. A great big thank you to Lunch Box creator Katrina Villa who designed most of our new logos, gave us lots of new design ideas and entertained us with her cheerful and wacky stories as we slaved here at the Inquirer office. Special thanks, too, to the Inquirer Art & Design Department for helping us lay-out stories and photos in these bigger pages.

Well, that's it. Enjoy!

Natasha B. Vizcarra
JUNIOR INQUIRER EDITOR



WE need writers

IF YOU'RE 10-12 years old and can write very good essays, news and feature stories, we would like to hear from you! Write a 200-300 word essay about your most memorable experience in school and send it to the editor at nvizcarra@inquirer.com.ph with your contact details.

JOURNAL PAGES

Summer's Done

By Nico Miguel N. Garcia
Southridge School, Muntinlupa City

SUMMER...: that's the time of the year when the fun is under the sun. Well, we've all heard of that already. We heard that a month ago and you know what that means: vacation time is almost done and school days are just around the corner.

The tall teachers will stand beside you as they wait for your knowledge to brighten and your brain cells to become active again. The school bell will ring and it's time to write on your usual test papers again. The library will open its doors and feed your memory. The tables and chairs will soon have company again. They will be warmed again.

School time is coming. Time for studying and reading every week. But, that never means it won't be any fun. Books and blackboards can be fun. The school can be fun. It's full of things I've been so excited to get into.

Those things are the classmates and the great joy that we have with them. Whether you're in kindergarten, grade school, high school or in college, you'll always have the good company of your classmates.

First you talk, then a response comes. Then you respond again. That routine is way better than it sounds like because it's a routine well done with your friends in school. Spending school activities whether with one best friend or the whole batch would be pleasant and more importantly, really cool and fun.

School plays and official games would be stupendous, too. The whole school and classmates would be there for more amusement and, once again, more fun. Whether it's hottah-hottah summah or school-is-cool time, having a boring day would never be an option!

What's on your mind?
Send us your essays about life in school and at home (200-300 words). Who knows, you might just get published!

JI Bags Best Children's Newspaper Award

By Eline Santos

IT was a double victory for JUNIOR INQUIRER at the UNICEF-PPI Child-Friendly Newspaper and Journalist Awards!

For the second time in a row, Junior Inquirer won as Outstanding Children's Newspaper of the Year, while JI contributor, 14-year-old Francisco "Kiko" Dipasupil Barros, won as Outstanding Child Writer for his touching essay, "Goodbye Mom," published last February 2, 2002.

"It feels great," Kiko gave a quiet smile, "my first award in writing."

Kiko wrote about what it was like losing his mother, Sonia Dipasupil-Barros, in September 1998.

"It has been harder," Kiko shared. "For example, she used to help me with my assignments but now I have to do it on my own. It's a bit harder so that's why we have to work harder, too."

Being the eldest, he also watches out for his two younger siblings.

Kiko graduated with second honors from the Ateneo de Manila last March. He is an incoming high school freshman at the same school.

Kiko had given up hope that his essay would get published. It came out three months later on his birthday.

"I was convinced it was my mom's birthday gift to me," he said.

For aspiring writers, Kiko shares a piece of advice: "Read books first. Read lots of books. That's where you get the inspiration, the interest and the experience to write—from authors who already write."

JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

KIKO Dipasupil Barros

Junior Inquirer

Straight from JI Readers

You can reach us via e-mail! Our address is ji@inquirer.com.ph
Don't forget to include your complete name, age, snail mail address and phone number.
Hope to hear from you soon!

What happened?!

DEAR Editor,

Hello! I have been an avid reader of the JUNIOR INQUIRER since 1996. What happened to JI? There have been drastic and undesirable changes. From the fun-filled and informative newspaper composed of 12 pages, JI is now only 8 pages and only contains trivial articles. It's not informative anymore. This makes a mess of JI's credibility and impact. Please bring back the JI I waited for every Saturday, the one I knew since my childhood, the real Junior Inquirer!—**ALVIN DUKE SY**, 14, Malolos, Bulacan

Dear Alvin,

We couldn't agree with you more! Sadly, our bosses said we will have to make do with 8 pages because, well, paper is more expensive these days. Bummer, huh? Yup.

*But you're now holding a bigger and better Junior Inquirer, aren't you? So, don't worry. We haven't given up on trying to make this newspaper better for our readers...Even if it means more white hairs on our heads!—**The Junior Inquirer Staff***

World Scope Fan

DEAR Editor,

I have loved reading JI since I was a kid, because of all the information that's clearly and wonderfully presented to the youth. My favorite portion of JI is World-Scope—the stories are fascinating. I must say the illustrations are cool, too! Great going everyone! JI rules!—**HERSCHEL TAN**, 15, Manila

Being Smart Isn't Everything

I AM part of an advanced class at school. Still, I think intelligence is a talent that is not exceedingly important. My teacher once said she would rather have a student who isn't so bright but is a very good person, than an intelligent student who likes to brag about his brains. So, to readers out there, always remember to be respectful and loving, too.—**MARK CASTILLO**, Grade 6A, La Salle Greenhills

WORLD SCOPE

Mars
New York USA
Tokyo Japan
Idaho USA
Washington D.C. USA

A Martian Weather Report

WELCOME to another edition of Mars: Rain or Shine! In this NASA photo, check out a raging dust storm in Syria Planum, south of the Labyrinthus Noctis troughs (those gray and white smudges at lower center). We also have water ice clouds that are present over each of the five largest Tharsis volcanoes, Olympus Mons (right center), Alba Patera (upper center), Ascraeus Mons (near center), Pavonis Mons (toward lower left), and Arsia Mons (lower left). And, that sploshy-looking black and white thingy on top is the summer-time north polar residual water ice cap. Neat, huh? *AFP*

Fashion Pooch

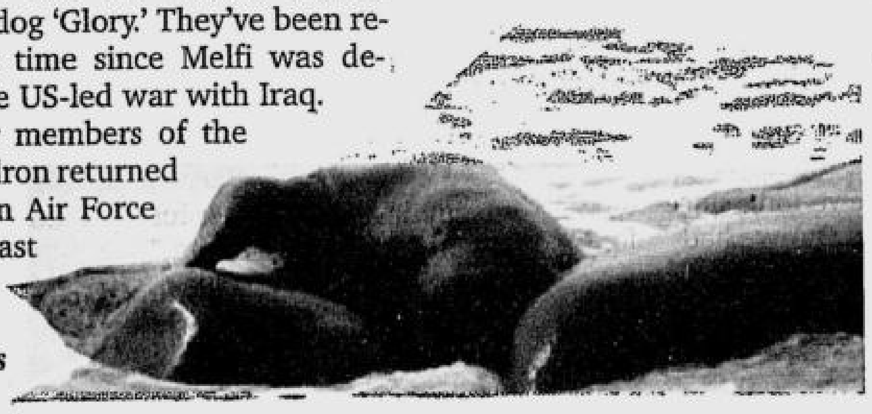
WHAT? There's a dog on the runway! A dachshund named Hal models a *yukata* summer *kimono* for pets. His owner wears a matching yukata during a fashion show at Tokyo's Mitsukoshi department store. The fireworks-design lightweight kimono is recommended for summer dog-walks. Don't forget the cutie yellow bow. *Reuters*

Should boys and girls study separately?

SIXTH-GRADERS Ryan Cornie, left, Evan Albright and Eric Marvin, right, all age 12, work together on the computer in their English class at Kimberly Middle School in Kimberly, Idaho. The school's sixth-grade classes are divided up into separate classes, one for boys and one for girls, for the core classes of Math, Science, English and Social Studies. Administrators say there are less classroom problems now that many of the classes are divided. *AP*

Mary & Glory

CAPTAIN Mary Melfi, who is a Weapons Systems Officer with the US 336th Fighter Squadron hugs her dog 'Glory.' They've been reunited for the first time since Melfi was deployed as part of the US-led war with Iraq. Melfi and 17 other members of the 336th Fighter Squadron returned to Seymour Johnson Air Force Base May. late last month after participating in the war with Iraq. *Reuters*



Whee for the Manatee!

YEY! This is certainly good news. The manatee is being taken out of the US' 'endangered species' list and brought down to its 'threatened species' list. Yehey! In the picture, four beached manatees are seen in the surf off Boca Raton, Florida. *AP*

Snuggle up to a
PET COCKROACH

DOG too demanding? Allergic to cats? Then how about coming home to a lovable, giant cockroach? Workers in Australia's pet industry say the demand for insects as pets has risen in the past five years because of more cramped living—and so has the number of people befriending cockroaches, with the biggest of the species native to Australia.

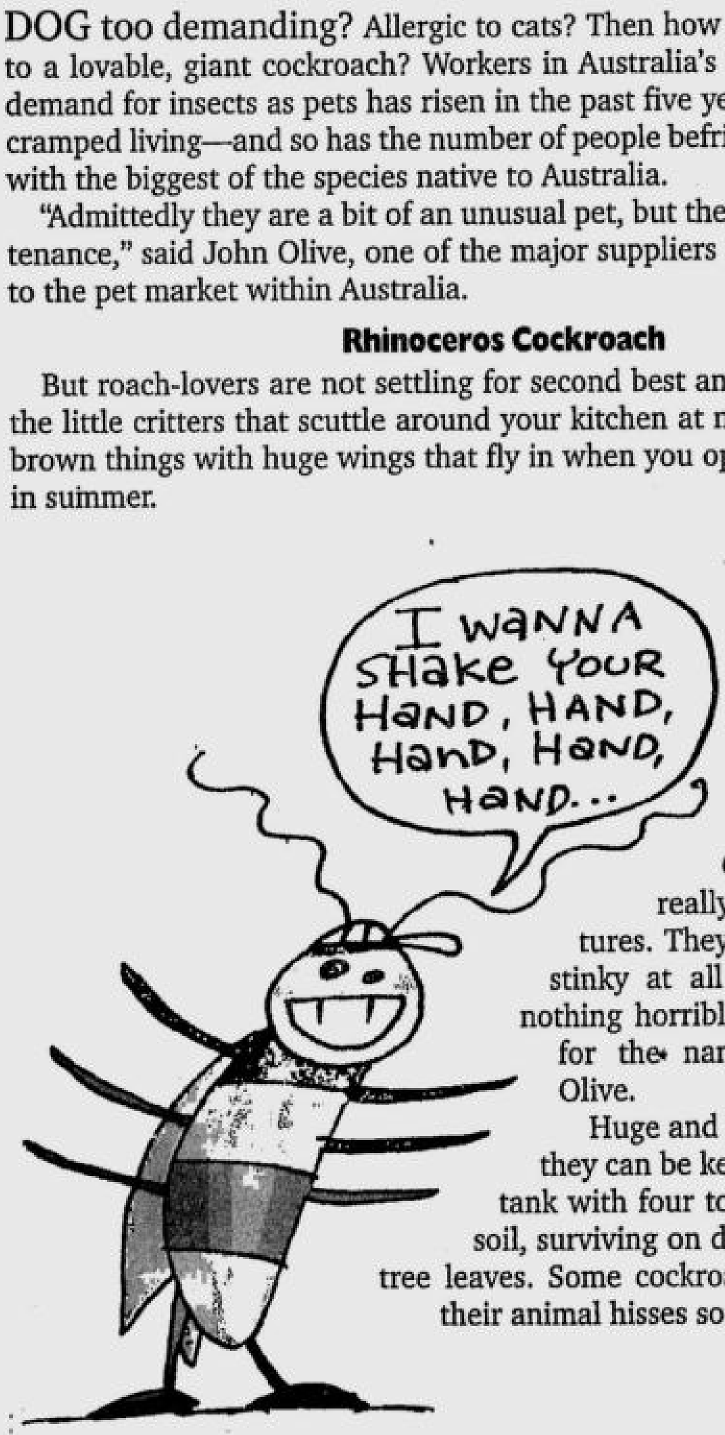
"Admittedly they are a bit of an unusual pet, but they are very low maintenance," said John Olive, one of the major suppliers of giant cockroaches to the pet market within Australia.

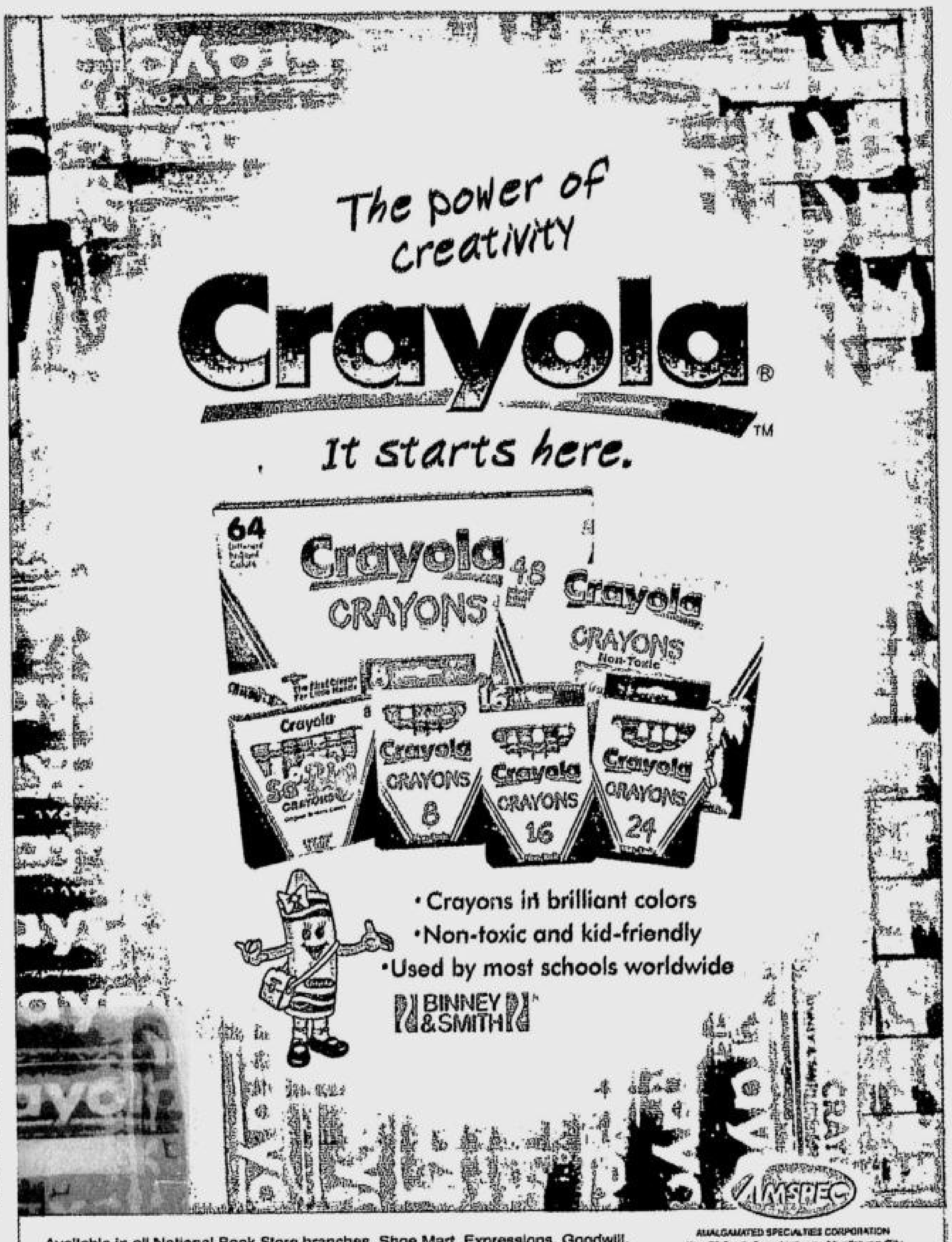
Rhinoceros Cockroach

But roach-lovers are not settling for second best and befriending any of the little critters that scuttle around your kitchen at night or the offensive brown things with huge wings that fly in when you open the balcony door in summer.

They want the world's biggest cockroach, the giant burrowing cockroach or rhinoceros cockroach that is native to Australia, and found in the warm, northeastern state of Queensland. "These really are charming creatures. They're clean, they're not stinky at all and there really is nothing horrible about them except for the name cockroach," said Olive.

Huge and shiny with spiky legs, they can be kept in a medium-sized tank with four to five inches of sandy soil, surviving on dry eucalyptus or gum tree leaves. Some cockroach owners even say their animal hisses softly when stroked. *AP*


I WANNA SHAKE YOUR HAND, HAND, HAND, HAND, HAND...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John J. Fiftfon and Acid Ra

Story By Zhe Xu Lee
Art by Jason Moss

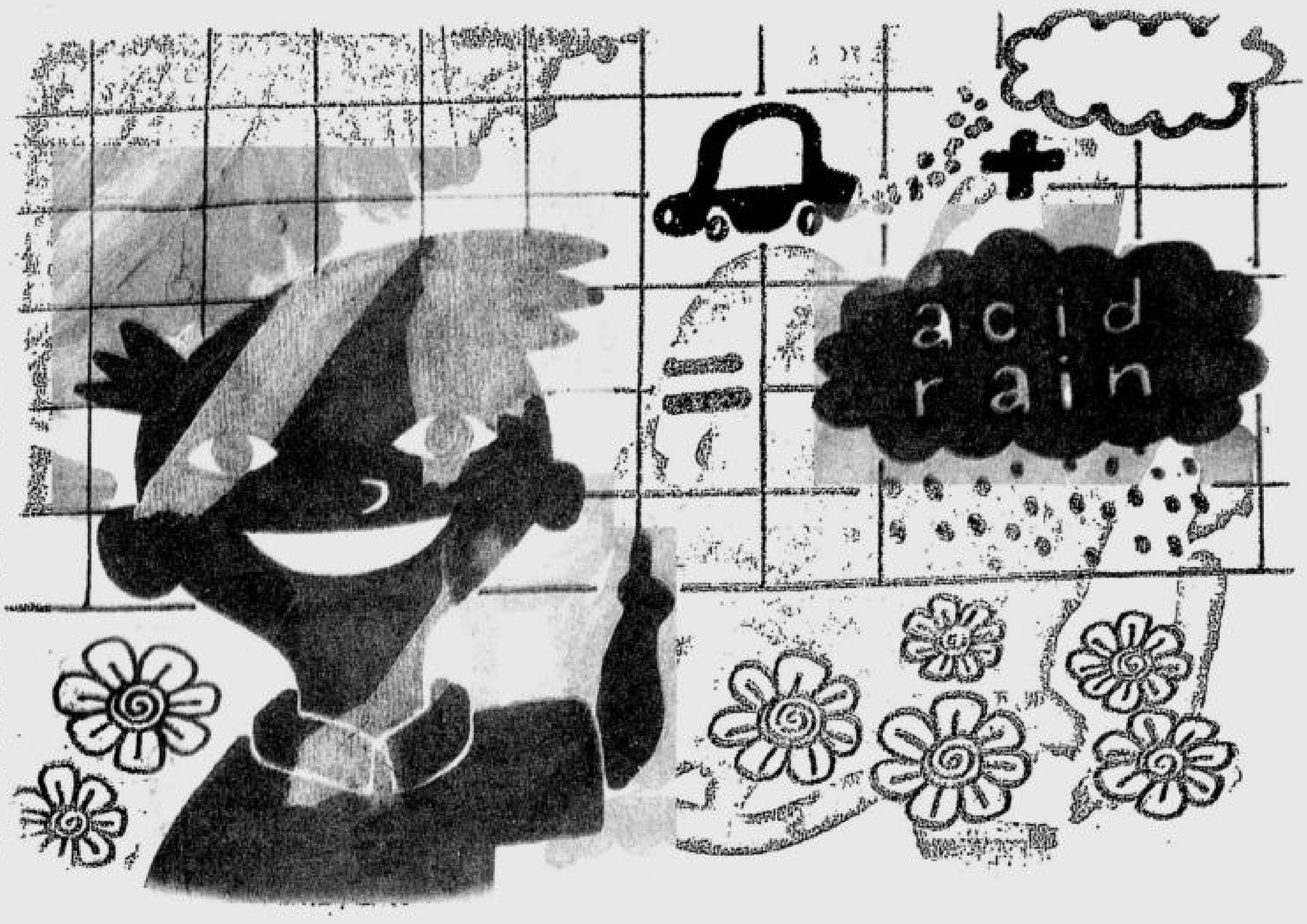
ONE day, eleven-year-old John J. Fiftfon was playing around in his garden on a sunny afternoon. Then suddenly, rain fell from the sky. His mother, Jill, quickly called him.

"John! Come in here! It's acid rain that might make you sick!"

"Really, Mom?" answered John as he entered the house. "Why?"

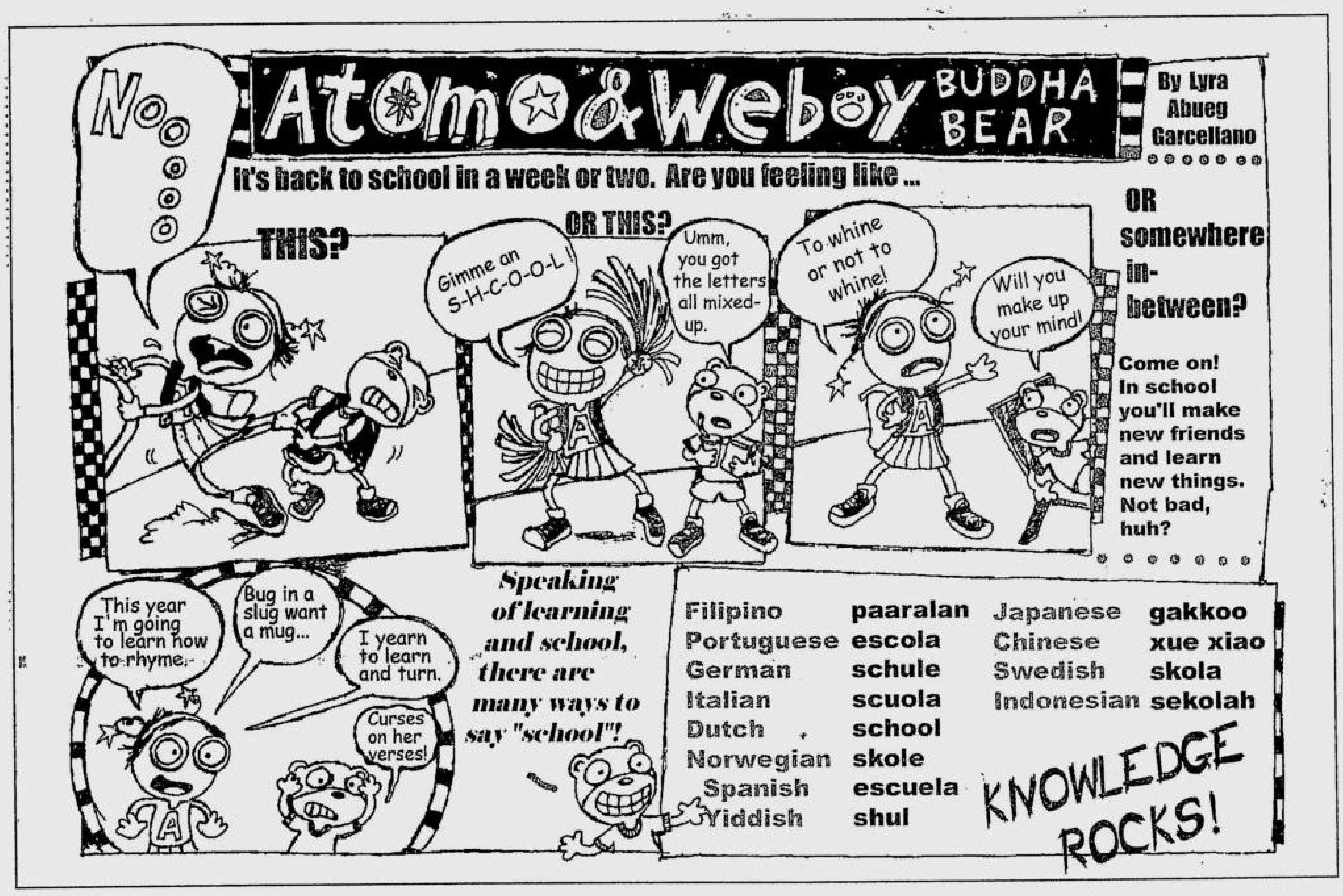
"Well, Jim, pollution from cars, jets and buses go up into the air. Then they mix with the rain clouds and make rain fall down, with them in it. The rain outside there is poisonous," pointed Jill.

"Wow, I didn't know that! How can we stop it?"



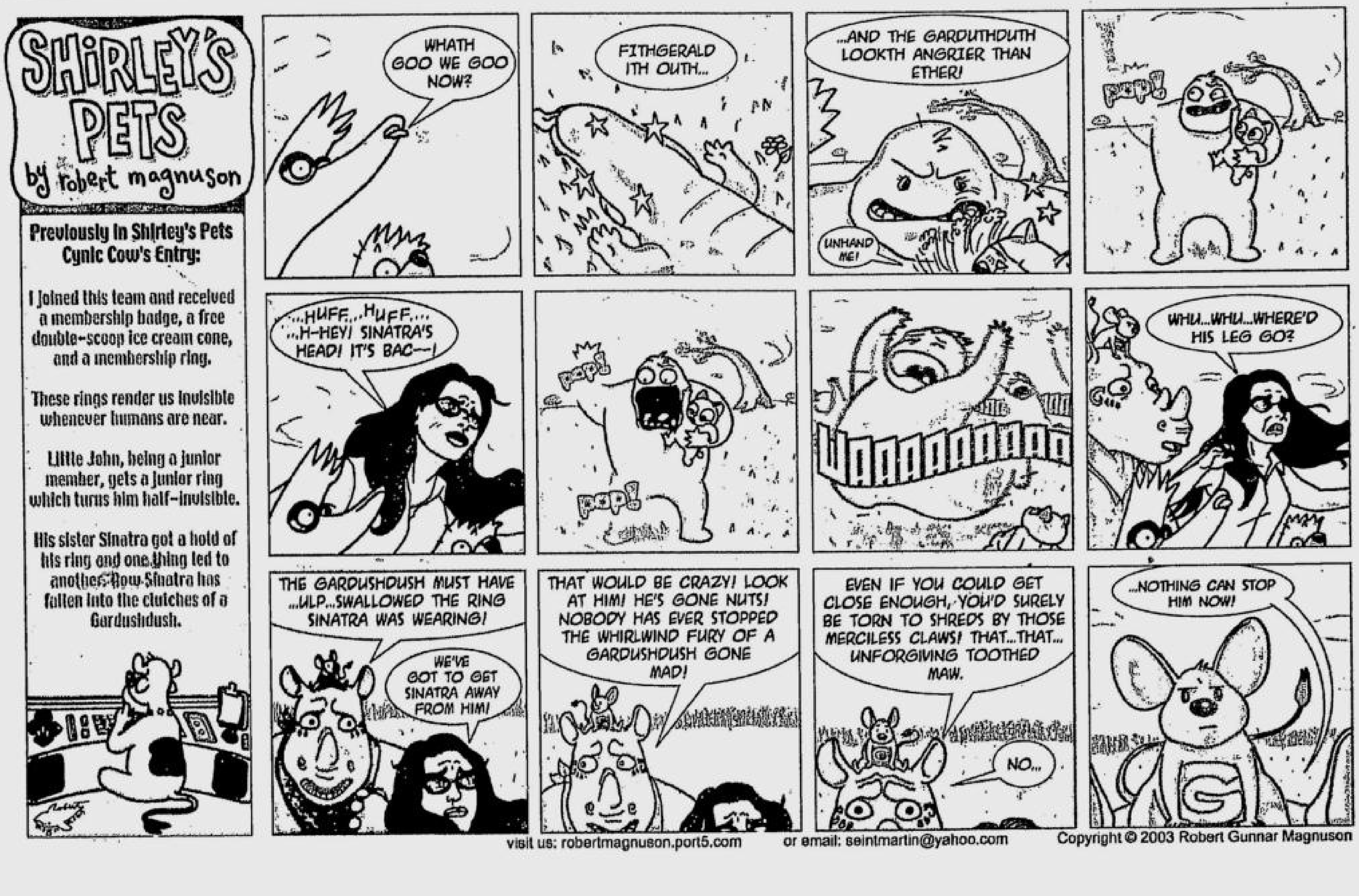
"Ms McMonke
announced John's
the whole school
had left for home.
into the theater an
to give a speech.
very brave and g
best."

"We can't exactly stop it,
duce it," answered his moth
After that, John went an
computer, then ate his dinn
bed. The next day, he quickly
breakfast of pickled yams c
chicken and a glass of cocor
"Daddy, I want to go to sc
today because our car spills
It's very near anyway! I car
my!"
"Okay, John. Jill, be ve
John! We don't want to lose
"Of course, Jeremy! Why
After eating their deliciou
two said goodbye to Jerem
reading a newspaper and d
coffee. The pair set off for Pi
ementary School and John
class.
"Class! Has anyone done
usual today?" asked the t
Monkey.
John J. raised his hands
walked to school instead of
"Why is that?" answered
"Because I wanted to ke
going up into the air!"
"Good job, John!" answe
"Everyone, we have to save
So Ms Mary Melissa M
taught the class a lesson ab
ment. Everyone, all fifteen
girls, listened carefully. The
Monkey's lessons and respe
The next day, a boy n
proudly announced, "I wal
Dick Dickson, Nancy, Eric,
ham all declared that they
same. Ms McMonkey expre
and gave the class a whol
computer games.
John Jim Fiftfon went ho
family what happened in s
even his maid Max and his
All four were very proud o
him to keep up his great wo


Atomo & Weboy
BUDDHA BEAR
By Lyra Abueg Garcellano
It's back to school in a week or two. Are you feeling like ...
Noooooo
THIS?
OR THIS?
Gimme an S-H-C-O-O-L!
Umm, you got the letters all mixed-up.
To whine or not to whine!
Will you make up your mind!
OR somewhere in-between?
Come on! In school you'll make new friends and learn new things. Not bad, huh?
This year I'm going to learn how to rhyme.
Bug in a slug want a mug...
I yearn to learn and turn.
Curses on her verses!
A
KNOWLEDGE ROCKS!

Speaking of learning and school, there are many ways to say "school"!

Filipino	paaralan	Japanese	gakkoo
Portuguese	escola	Chinese	xue xiao
German	schule	Swedish	skola
Italian	scuola	Indonesian	sekolah
Dutch	school		
Norwegian	skole		
Spanish	escuela		
Yiddish	shul		


SHIRLEY'S PETS
by robert magnuson
WHATH GOO WE GOO NOW?
FITHGERALD ITH OUTH...
...AND THE GARDUTHDUTH LOOKTH ANGRIER THAN ETHER!
UNHAND ME!
POP!
...HUFF...HUFF... ...H-HEY! SINATRA'S HEAD! IT'S BAC—!
POP!
POP!
WAAAAAAAAA
WHU...WHU...WHERE'D HIS LEG GO?
THE GARDUSHDUSH MUST HAVE ...ULP...SWALLOWED THE RING SINATRA WAS WEARING!
WE'VE GOT TO GET SINATRA AWAY FROM HIM!
THAT WOULD BE CRAZY! LOOK AT HIM! HE'S GONE NUTS! NOBODY HAS EVER STOPPED THE WHIRLWIND FURY OF A GARDUSHDUSH GONE MAD!
EVEN IF YOU COULD GET CLOSE ENOUGH, YOU'D SURELY BE TORN TO SHREDS BY THOSE MERCILESS CLAWS! THAT...THAT... UNFORGIVING TOOTHED MAW.
NO...
...NOTHING CAN STOP HIM NOW!
G

Previously in Shirley's Pets
Cynic Cow's Entry:

I joined this team and received a membership badge, a free double-scoop ice cream cone, and a membership ring.

These rings render us invisible whenever humans are near.

Little John, being a junior member, gets a junior ring which turns him half-invisible.

His sister Sinatra got a hold of his ring and one thing led to another. Now Sinatra has fallen into the clutches of a Gardushdush.

visit us: robertmagnuson.port5.com or email: seintmartin@yahoo.com

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in

y had
efforts to
fter John
He was led
d was told
John was
ave it his

but we can re-
er.
d played on his
er and went to
gobbled up his
oated with raw
ut milk.
ool by walking
out dirty stuff.
go with Mom-

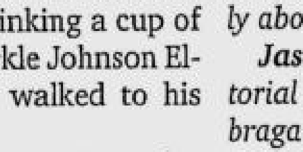
y careful with
him!"
wouldn't I?"
s breakfast, the
, who was still
inking a cup of
kle Johnson El-
walked to his

something un-
acher, Ms Mc-

. "Yes! Today, I
riding a car!"
Ms McMonkey.
ep fumes from

red McMonkey.
the earth!"
rin McMonkey
ut the environ-
boys and six
y loved Ms Mc-
ted her.
med Jonathan
ked to school!"
Sean, and Gra-
had done the
sed her delight
e hour to play

me and told his
chool that day,
chauffeur Erin.
John and told
k. John was delighted and went to bed very happy that night.



The next morning, Jeremy came into the kitchen without his car keys and with a surprise declaration. "In support of my precious son John Jim's efforts to reduce toxic acid rain, I have decided not to drive my Chevrolet to work from this day on. I will only use my car for long trips."

John was very happy and had tears in his eyes. Again, he and his mother set off for school on foot. When he arrived in school, a delightful surprise was waiting for him.

When he entered the huge school complex, a crowd gathered around him, shouting that they had walked to school to help reduce acid rain. Apparently, Ms McMonkey had announced John's efforts to the whole school after John had left for home. He was led into the theater and was told to give a speech. John was very brave and gave it his best.

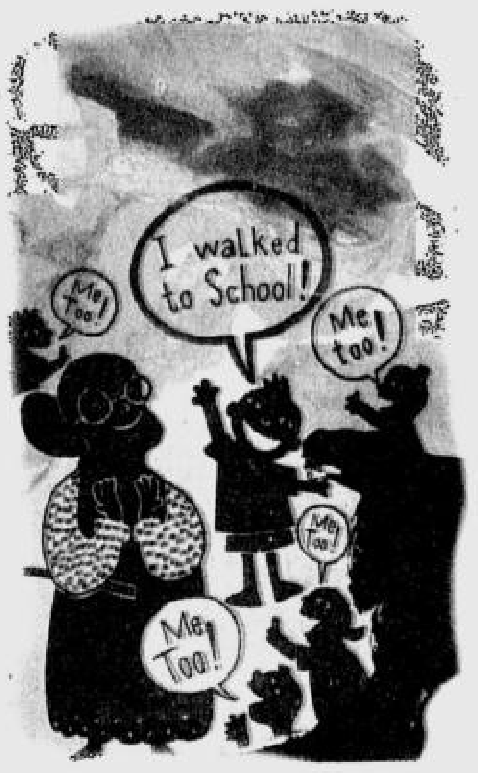
"Good morning, children of Pickle Johnson Elementary School! I am proud to announce my anti-acid rain program! First, let me introduce myself. I am John Jim Fiftfon, 11 years old. Acid rain is caused when toxic exhausts from our vehicles go up into the air, dirtying the clouds. When it rains, the toxic gases mix with the clean rain and make our rain dirty. We can reduce this disgusting stuff! Thank you!"

John J. Fiftfon's efforts became known around the world. Many people followed his example. When he entered the University of Berkley, he founded the Anti-Air Pollution Foundation. After graduating, he embarked on a trip around the world to promote his efforts. He was later knighted by King Charles of the United Kingdom and praised by many people, including chief executives from Microsoft, General Electric, and many officials from the government. Sir John Fiftfon's foundation served many countries worldwide and he died a happy man, his job well done.

John Jim Titford Fiftfon loved the environment and helped reduce pollution. You can, too. Start now!

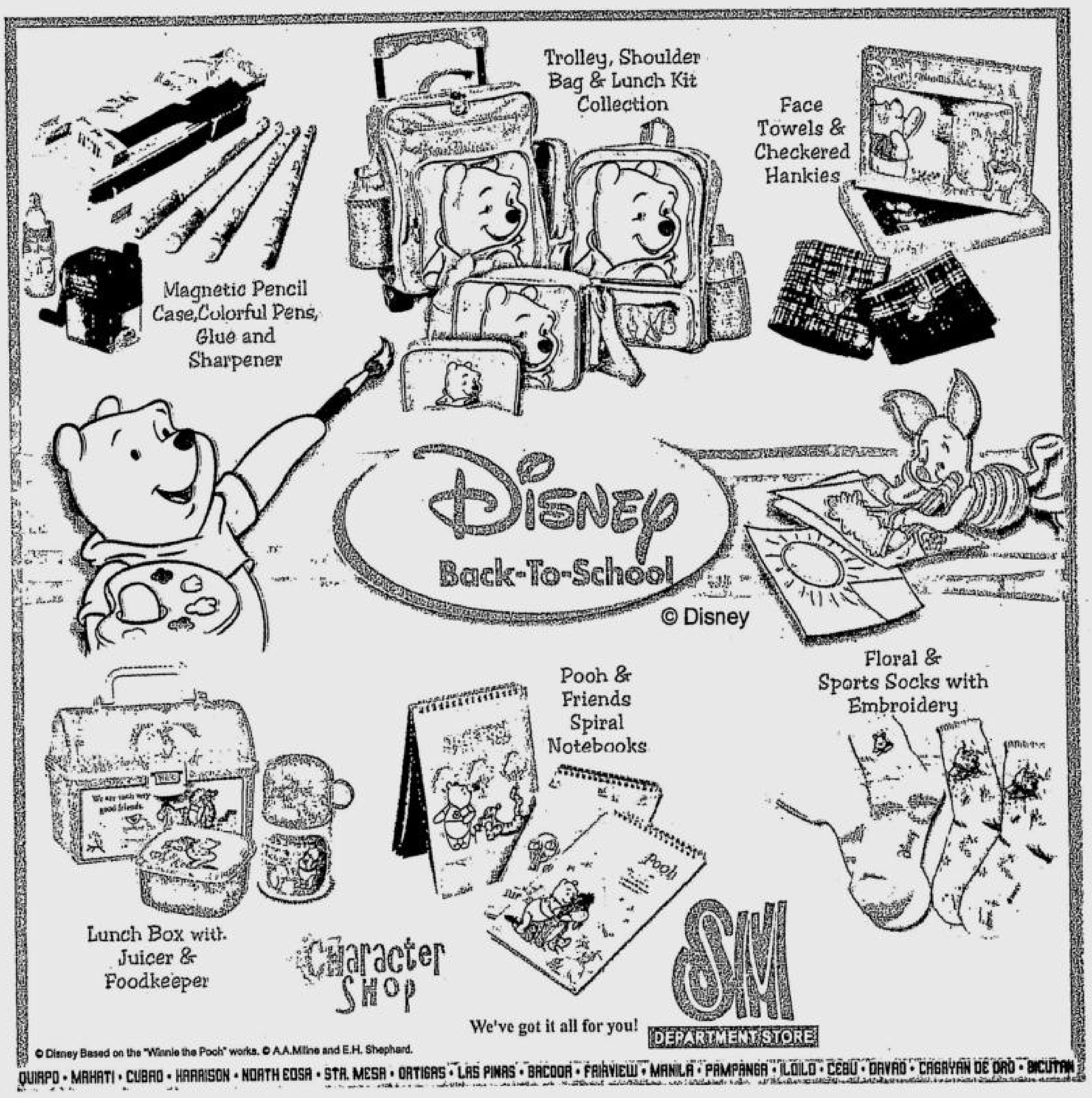
***Zhe Xu Lee** was born in Singapore and is a Grade 5 student of International School Manila. He is a math whiz, thus says his age in terms of a riddle—a dozen minus one on the third day of the third month in a year. He is hooked on computers and feels very strongly about current events in the Middle East.*

***Jason** is a painter, an illustrator and editorial cartoonist. One of his books, "The Zimbragatzees of the Planet Zing," deals with air pollution.*


I walked to School!
Me too!
Me too!
Me too!
Me Too!

You can be on For or By Kids too!

SEND US YOUR STORIES, POEMS, ESSAYS
AND ART WITH SELF-ADDRESSED,
STAMPED ENVELOPE.
INCLUDE A BRIEF PARAGRAPH ABOUT YOURAELF
AND A PICTURE.



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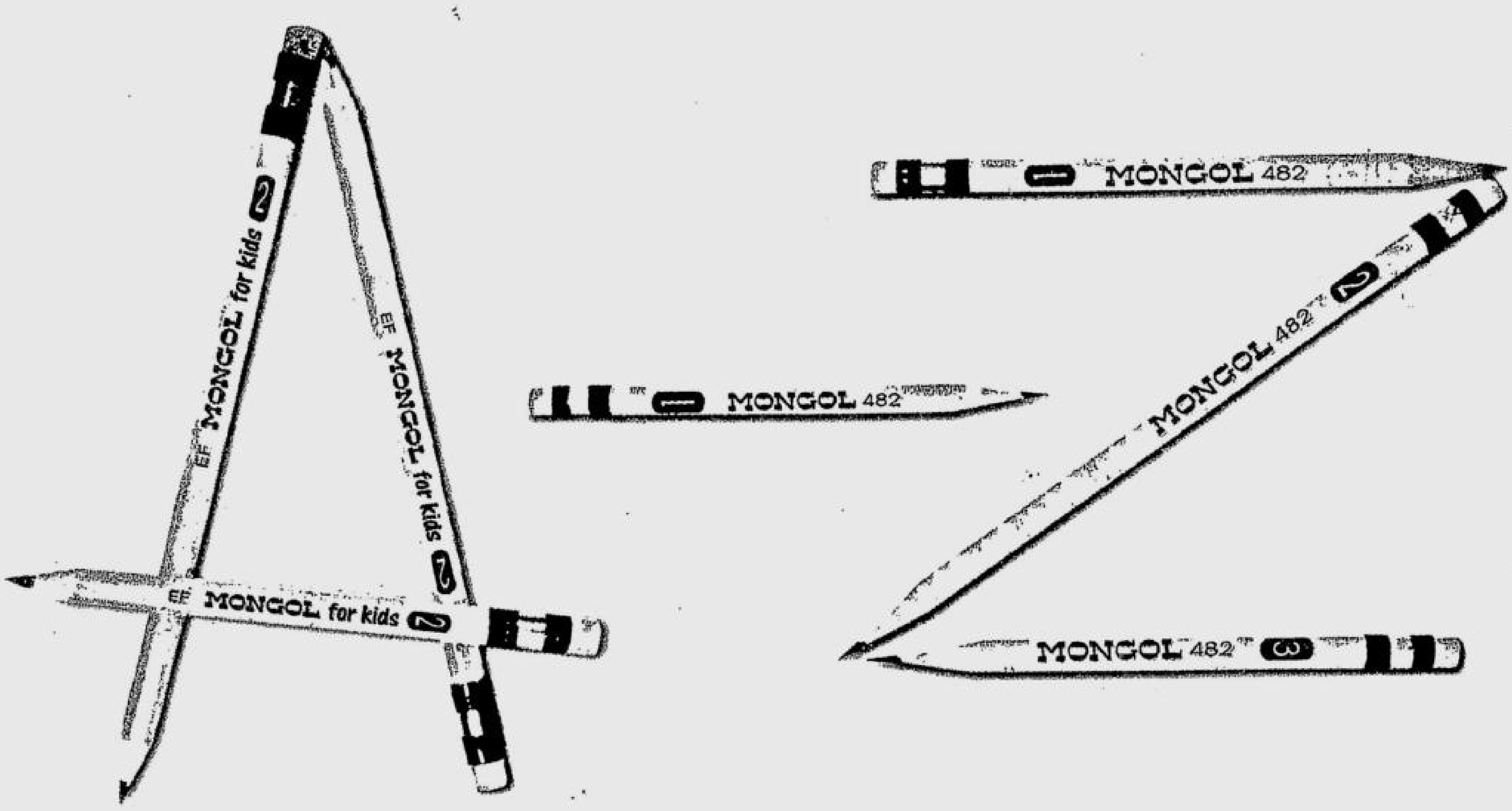

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MIRIAM Grade School students Hazel Hernandez, Andrea Santos, and Margery Bumagat are ready for school again.

DENNIS SABANGAN

What's Hot, What's Not

IF you've led a hermit-like existence this summer, here's JUNIOR INQUIRER Special's quick review sheet of what's cool and what's not so cool.

X-MEN'S hot.

Hottah!

Actor: Keanu Reeves
Actress: Kristin Kreuk
Movie: X-Men2
Music Group: F4
Singer: Norah Jones
TV Show: Meteor Garden
Cartoon: Kim Possible
Song: Oh Baby Baby Baby
PC Game: SIMS Unleashed
Sports Stars: Venus and Serena Williams
Book: Harry Potter

Nottah!

Actor: Marvin Agustin
Actress: Tanya Garcia
Movie: Like Mike
Music Group: Masculados
Singer: Britney Spears
TV Show: Meteor Garden
Cartoon: Beyblade
Song: Everything by Masculados
PC Game: Pacman
Sports Star: Efren Bata Reyes
Book: None

Nick's Choice

AMANDA'S cool!

NICKELODEON telecast its Kids' Choice Awards yesterday. The winners were:

Favorite male movie star: Adam Sandler
Favorite female movie star: Amanda Byrnes
Fave female butt-kicker award: Jennifer Love Hewitt
TV Show: Lizzie McGuire
Music Group: B2K
Male TV Star: Frankie Muniz
Fave fart in a movie: Scooby-Doo
Wannabe award (favorite role model): Will Smith
Burp Award: Justin Timberlake
Fave movie award: Austin Powers 3

NEW KID BLUES

By Eline Santos

HEY new kid! We feel for you! That's why we made this guide for making new friends. We hope you'll feel at home more easily.

New Kid in Section

The faces are familiar but you miss your friends. Why, oh, why did they have to transfer you at all?

MORE FRIENDS. Think of it this way. You're still friends with your former section and you're bound to make new ones in the present one. The more pals the merrier!

ASK. Sometimes it's harder to make friends with familiar faces instead of totally new ones. Some of them might know you while you have no idea what their names are. It's okay to ask.

PLEASE SIGN! You could try getting to know more about your new classmates with an autograph book. Your old one filled with friends from your former section might even be better than one that's new and empty. It's a hint on how friendly you are.

New Kid in School

Moving to a strange school is kind of scary. But it's also a chance to make a whole bunch of new friends.

SMILE! If your classmates all know each other, they would be curious to find out who you are. The easiest thing to do is to smile and say hi to your seatmate. Chatting is sure to follow. It's often the beginning of any good friendship.

MAP IT. Scope out the school before classes start. Then you'll know how to find your way around. Take note of your classroom, the canteen, restrooms, clinic and library.

You could practice telling a few funny stories or jokes to break the ice.

Promdi in Manila

TINUUD GYUD! If you're new in the city, improving your Tagalog or English can help a lot. Sadly, an accent is made fun of sometimes. But hey, you know three languages and your Manileño classmates only know two. So perhaps knowing a dialect is an asset after all!

MY HOMETOWN. Ask classmates if they've ever been to your place. Share stories about your province and the best things about it. Maybe you could share your province's specialty food, like pili nuts if you're from Bicol.

SUPLADA? Sometimes city folk are not as warm and hospitable as people from the province. Expect things to be different. Give yourself time to get used to it.

TOUR MANILA. Try out new things that can only be found here. Visit Ayala Museum, Museo Pambata, Intramuros and other fun or historic places. Enjoy the city!

Manileño in the Province

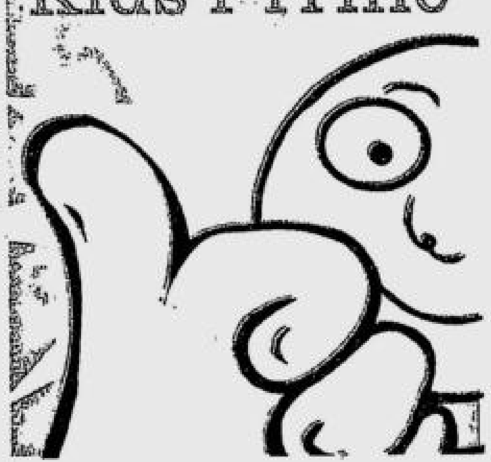
SIESTA TIME! If you've transferred to the province, expect things to be different—simpler and more relaxed.

MY BIG MOUTH. It's okay to share stories but avoid boasting about what you had in the city. No one likes an arrogant person.

GOODBYE SMOG! Be open-minded to the pleasures that you can only get in the province. Pristine beaches or beautiful trees. Breathe in the fresh air!

MALAGU KA! Learn the language. Your classmates will be thrilled to hear you speak in struggling Ilonggo, Bisaya, Kapampangan or Ilocano.

Kids'r'rrific



'Rrific kids are smart
'Rrific kids are fun
Some aren't in the honors list
But get their homework done
Somehow the world's
a better place
I know this much is true
Hey 'Rrific kid!
We know you're there
We love you 'cause you're you!

If you think you're 'Rrific' or know someone who is, fill out the nomination form below and send it to:

Junior Inquirer
'KIDS'R'RRIFIC' Page
Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces
corner Yague & Mascardo Streets
1231 Makati City

If chosen, you and your nominee will get a free Junior Inquirer T-shirt!

PAP'S DINOSAURS

A young artist and his very own dinosaur art exhibit

By Eline Santos

"I STARTED drawing when I was 2 years old. I drew ugly," Raphael "Paps" Orosa smiles shyly at the memory. "I became better because I practiced."

After six years of practice, Paps held his first dinosaur art exhibit at Xavier School's library last. February. Paps made over 20 works of art ranging from realistic dinos down to Zoids. He finished everything in four months. "My mother did the frames," he says.

Why does he love dinos? "I just do," the second-grader shrugs and grins. If he could spend a day in the prehistoric era, Paps says "I would hide in the bushes and draw the dinosaurs I haven't drawn before."

Paps also uses his talent in thoughtful, creative ways. While working on his exhibit, Paps and his mom were also making presents.

PAPS, 8, shows off his art.

JOHNNY VILLENA

"Every other day we made T-shirts for Christmas." They finished about 50 shirts. "I drew designs with gold paint at the back of black shirts. Mom added some color." They then gave away their dino shirts to relatives for Christmas.

Paps' father died several years ago, but not before passing on his artistic talent to his son. "He was the one who taught me how to draw," Paps credits his Dad.

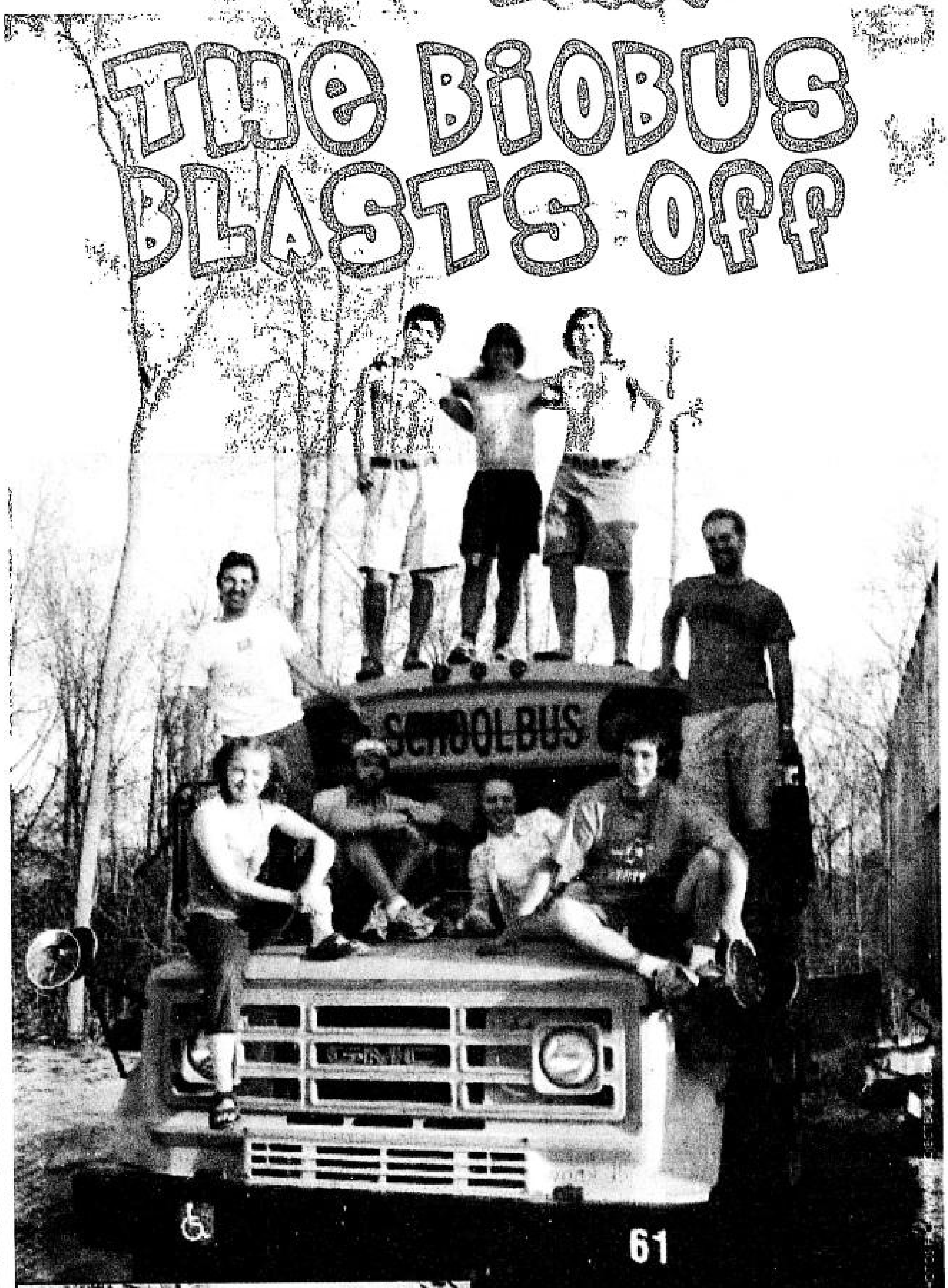
During free time, recess or lunch, Paps plays cush ball with his friends. "It's fun," says Paps.

Kids'r'rrific

nomination form

I nominate: ____________________
____
Age: ____________________
I think she's/he's 'Rrific because: (Here's a tip! Write a detailed description of a good deed, project or accomplishment by your nominee.)
____
____
____
____
____
____
____
____
She/he lives at ____________________
____
____
and studies at ____________________
____
Her/his contact number is: __________
____
Sender's Name: ____________________
____
Sender's Age & School: ____________________
____
Sender's Address: ____________________
____
Sender's Contact No. ____________________
____

THE BIOBUS BLASTS OFF



TOP: Team members take a breather after picking out the lucky bus. LEFT: Costume change from old school bus to—tadan!—the BioBus, out to save fuel, and maybe even the planet. TOP RIGHT: This hippie bus gets a lot of attention from other drivers. RIGHT: The view from up here is great! Ahhh... smell the onion rings. If you want to know how the BioBus is doing, log on to www.projectbiobus.com.

Vegetable Oil-Powered Bus Opens Road Trip

VERMONT, USA—A group of college students has set out on a cross-country road trip that is going to smell a lot like french fries.

But at least there won't be any squabbles over gas money: Their converted school bus is fueled by used vegetable oil from cafeterias and fast-food restaurants.

The 13 Middlebury College students said they wanted to combine their rite-of-passage road trip with an environmental message.

Vegetable oil creates less pollution than diesel fuel, said Thomas Hand, 19, who took a crash course at Middlebury in converting diesel tractor engines to run on veggie oil.

"It's an energy source that comes from the United States. It's about being self-sufficient," Hand said. "Also, it's free. It's using some resource that was going to be thrown away and reusing it."

Veggie Vehicles

The students are not the first to power their wheels with vegetable oil. Activist Joshua Tickell drove about 25,000 miles on his "Veggie Van USA" tours in the late 1990s.

The Middlebury students left campus on May 19 and plan to arrive in Conway, Washington by June 11, with plenty of stops in between to drop off classmates and do some rock climbing.

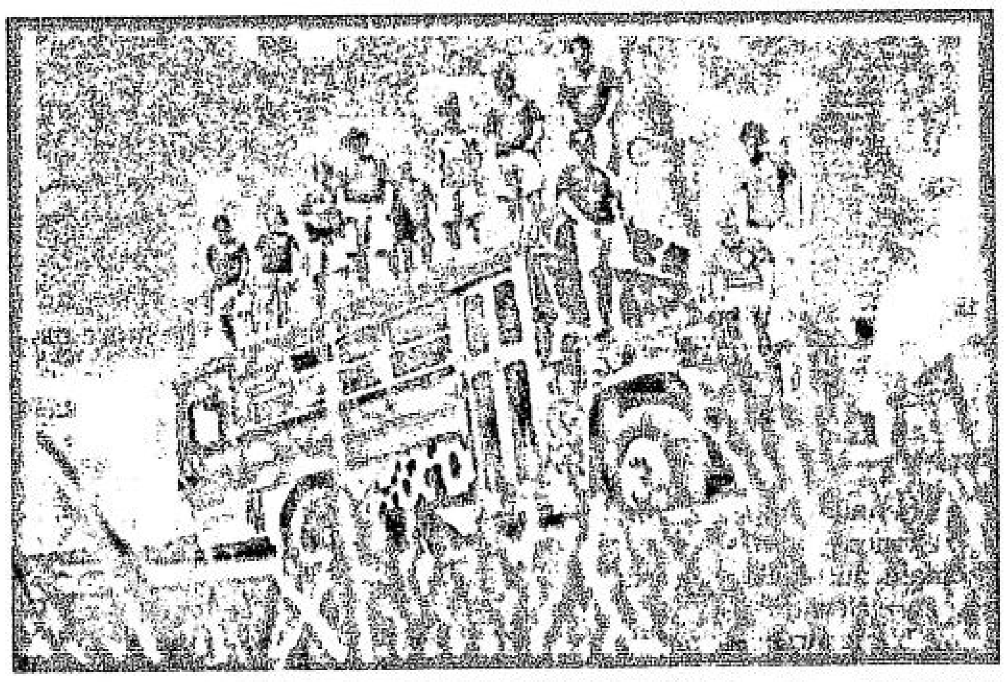
Oil Stops

Along the way, they will be keeping an eye out for restaurants where they can ask for used vegetable oil. The students filter the vegetable oil and store it in two vats on the bus. To get the bus rolling, the students first start it briefly with diesel fuel to heat and lower the viscosity of the vegetable oil.

Smells Like...

They are sure to draw attention: They will be cruising no faster than 55 mph, with "Powered by Veggie Oil" painted on the back of the bus. And the oil "smells a little bit like whatever it was used to fry—sometimes you get onion rings, french fries, chicken patties," Hand said.

"It's part of an adventure we'll remember for the rest of our lives hopefully," said Logan Duran. *AP*



Ready for School?

(from page 1)

BEST FRIEND No. 2, 3... Make friends in your section. Spend recess and lunch with them. See your best friend after school.

Preparing for the First Day

GET ORGANIZED. A designated space, such as a clean study table, is needed for doing your homework. Make sure everything you need—uniform, books, lunch—is ready for the next day.

A HEALTH REMINDER. Eat a good breakfast. Hunger can be a distraction to learning. Get a good night's sleep so you can get to school on time. You can practice waking up early the week before.

SCOPE IT! Visit the school beforehand and locate your classroom. If you're new at school, find out where the library, canteen, and bathrooms are.

Hello
There's a Banana in my ear!

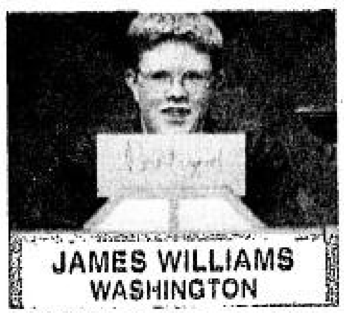
MY IMPORTANT NUMBERS

Name:
Parent's Name:
Office Tel. No.:
Home:
Cell:
School Tel. No.:
Cell No.:
Bus Operator:
Landline:
Cell Phone:

FILL up the card, cut out and laminate—or paste on cardboard. Keep it in your wallet as a handy directory.

Home-Schooled Student Wins US Geography Prize

A FOURTEEN-year-old who is taught at home by his mother beat 54 other students to win the title of US National Geographic Bee champion and a prize worth $25,000.



JAMES sits behind his winning answer. AP

After blitzing through a series of stumpers such as questions about volcanic formations in Tanzania, James Williams from Washington state correctly answered a tie-breaker about which country possessed the Indian state of Goa until 1961.

Runner-up Dallas Simons answered "the United Kingdom," but James never wavered when he wrote "Portugal."

James and his competitors are a far cry from the vast majority of young Americans.

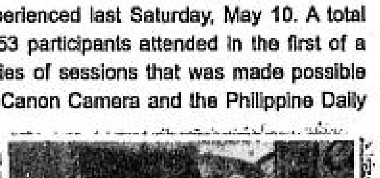
About 11 percent of Americans aged 18 to 24 cannot find their own country on a map, and a whopping 50 percent could not properly identify China, the United Kingdom or Japan, according to the 2002 National Geographic-Roper Global Literacy Survey.

Canon CAMERA • JUNIOR INQUIRER

SUMMER PHOTOGRAPHY WORKSHOP for KIDS

Learning and having fun at the same time!

This was what the children who attended the Summer Photography Workshop experienced last Saturday, May 10. A total of 53 participants attended in the first of a series of sessions that was made possible by Canon Camera and the Philippine Daily Inquirer's Junior Inquirer. Participants came from within Metro Manila and as far as Laguna and nearby provinces.



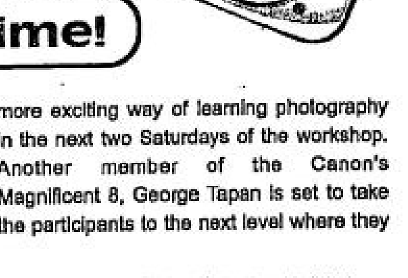
Last Saturday's activity kicked off the series of Photography Workshops scheduled for three Saturdays that will culminate in a Graduation Day on May 31, 2003. The first day of the Workshop tackled the basics of photography.

The topics included familiarization with the parts of a camera, taking good care of the camera, proper handling of the camera and correct body position and body posture when taking shots. Proper loading of the film was also demonstrated, Before the session ended, the children were required to do hands-on practice in loading films using their own cameras.

Ibarra Deri, a well-known professional portrait photographer and a member of Canon's Magnificent 8, conducted the workshop. He successfully created an environment for learning that made the workshop lively and of course, very educational. His mode of teaching was simple but effective as evident with every participant's ability to grasp the concepts he taught that afternoon. He willingly and encouragingly answered the questions the kids smartly thrown at him. From time to time, he treated the kids with some of his magic tricks that kept their attention burning throughout the 2-hour workshop.

Besides being treated to Ibarra Deri's lecture and magic tricks, the participants were also given gifts courtesy of the sponsors of the Photography Workshop. The sponsors distributed product samples as an additional treat to the participants. The workshop was supported by Kids At Work, Kameraworld, Anchor Milk UHT, Gardenia Bread and Henlin.

Super East Asia Enterprises Inc., the exclusive distributor of Canon Camera in the Philippines, promises a more exciting way of learning photography in the next two Saturdays of the workshop. Another member of the Canon's Magnificent 8, George Tapan is set to take the participants to the next level where they will have a hands-on shooting session. This would definitely put into practice the theories they learned from the first session.



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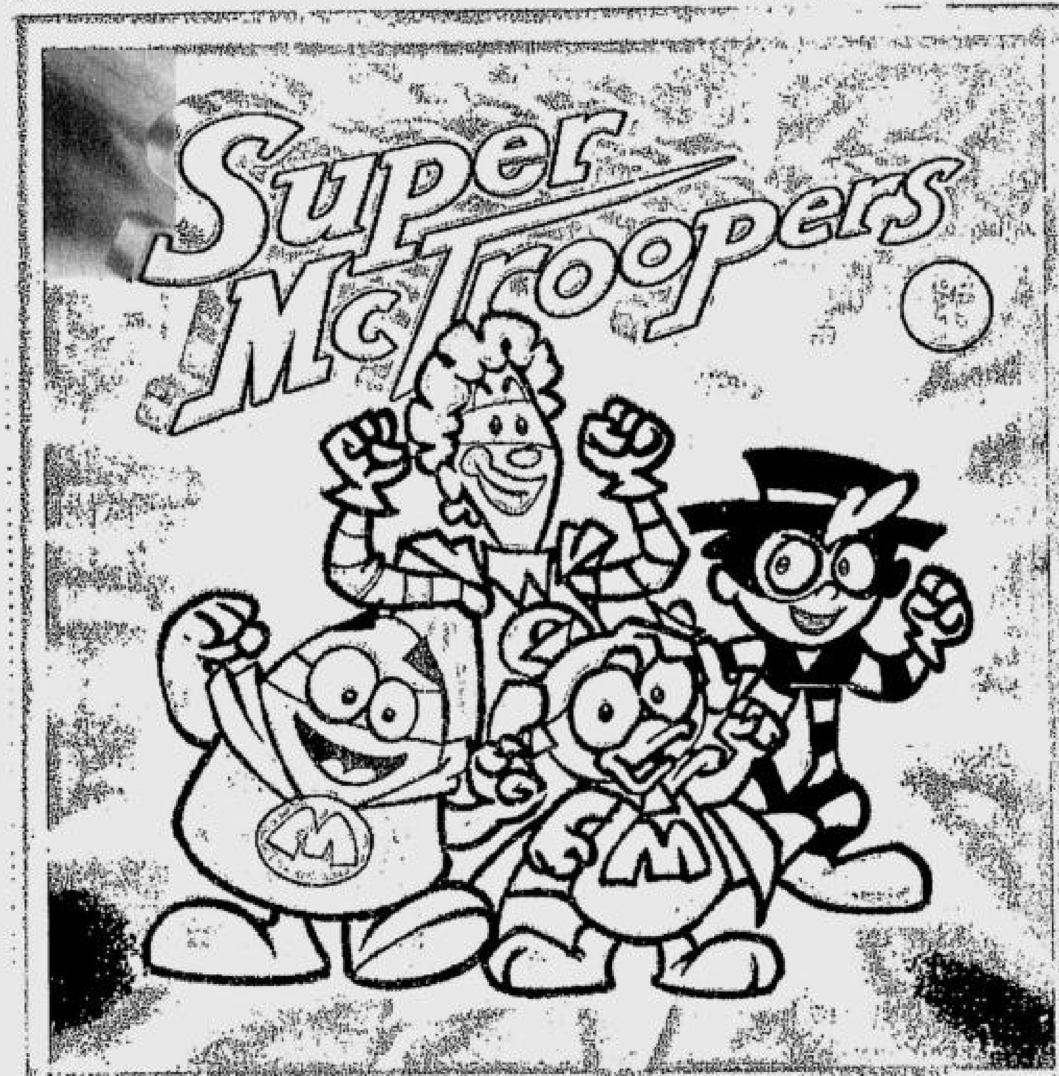
Super McTroopers

New heroes on the Block

New heroes continue to come up. Superman...Spiderman...the Hulk...and Dare Devil. They awe us in their gravity-defying stunts and extra ordinary powers in the movie screens. Likewise, we have new heroes at McDonald's restaurant. Their mission is to promote happiness and inspiration to the kids and kids at heart.

Look out for Ronald in Superhero Makeover

It's a bird! It's a plane! No, it's not exactly like what we've heard before. Ronald in his superhero makeover doesn't exactly lift weights, fly to outer space or perform other superhuman feats. He performs what he does best by setting himself as a good example.

He still is the McDonald's icon. With new comic appeal, he could better empathize and relate to the kids of the recent generation. That's his power," according to Kenneth S. Yang, Executive Vice President of McDonald's.

Ronald in his new look could be seen in the Birthday Party program of McDonald's.

The Super McTroopers offer 'Better-than-the-usual' way to Celebrate Birthdays

We want the children and their guests to have an ultra-fun birthday party. Ronald and the rest of the McTroopers - Grimace, Hamburglar and Birdie would make sure that it is an enjoyable experience for them"

Next to Mom and Dad, this is how Ronald wants the celebrant to feel like to be the most special person tin the world," he added. "And we would do so with the theme 'Ronald Party' with improved image features, new amenities, and better packages and give-aways."

Awesome party amenities include hats with nametags, certificates, posters, invitation and thank you cards, among others.

We offer a wide array of value plus party options. They could pick from our affordable Super Meal food packages. Also, they get to choose if they want the venue in-store, out-of-store, or a pick up party."

New designs and added colors go for the party banners, backdrop together with the balloons, and carousel to give the festive spirit and set the party ambiance.

A plus, the weekday special offers of the Birthday Party Program provide free upsize of soft drinks and gift certificates.

The worry-free Birthday Party Program will apply to all McDonald's restaurants for confirmed party bookings and celebrations.

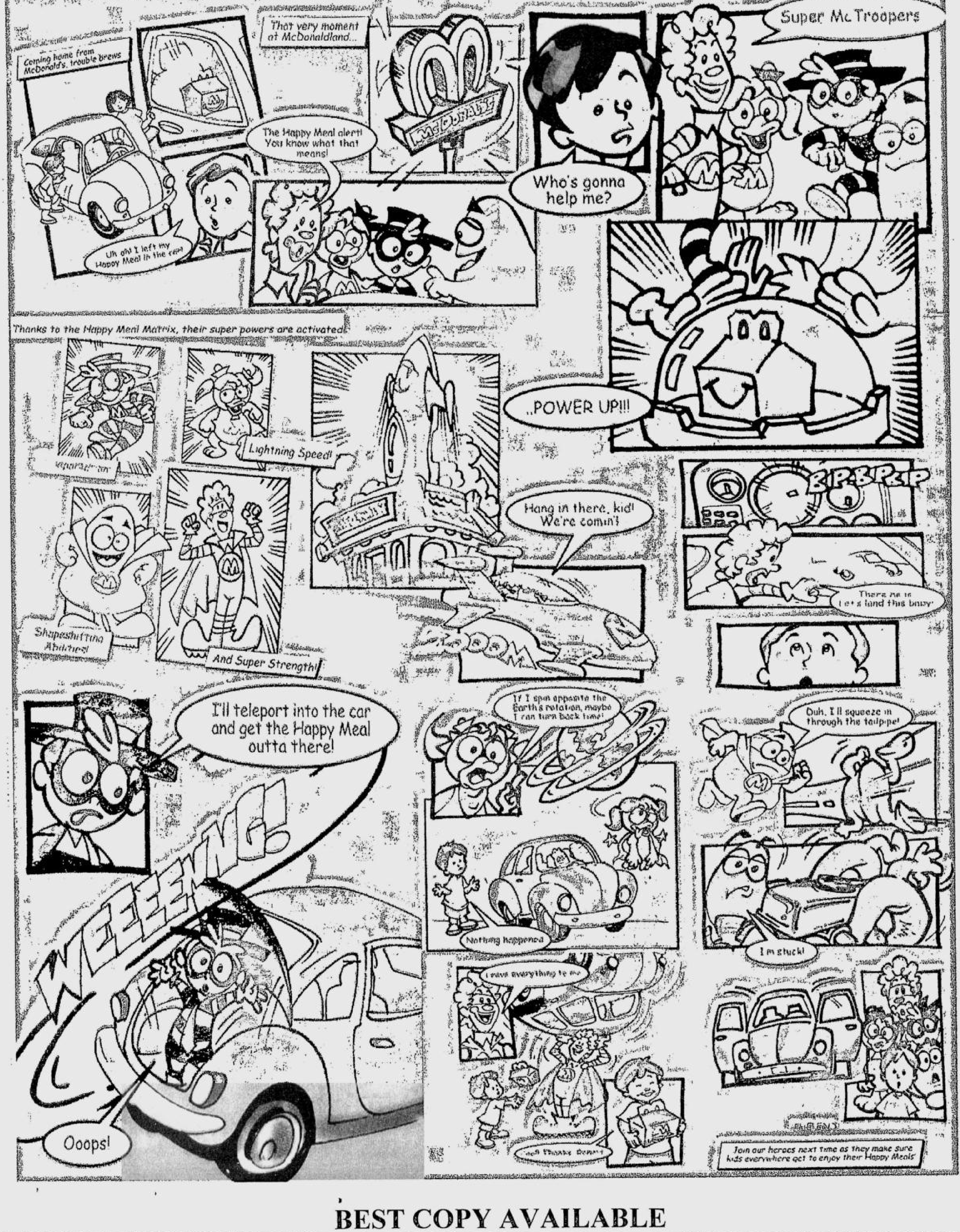
Coming home from McDonald's, trouble brews
Uh oh! I left my Happy Meal in the car!
That very moment at McDonaldland...
McDONALD'S
The Happy Meal alert! You know what that means!
Who's gonna help me?
Super McTroopers
..POWER UP!!!
Thanks to the Happy Meal Matrix, their super powers are activated!
Lightning Speed!
Shapeshifting Abilities!
And Super Strength!
Hang in there, kid! We're comin'!
ZOOM
BIPBIPBIP
There he is. Let's land this baby!
I'll teleport into the car and get the Happy Meal outta there!
WEEEEENG!
Ooops!
If I spin opposite the Earth's rotation, maybe I can turn back time!
Nothing happened
Duh, I'll squeeze in through the tailpipe!
I'm stuck!
Leave everything to me
Thanks Ronald!
THE END
Join our heroes next time as they make sure kids everywhere get to enjoy their Happy Meals

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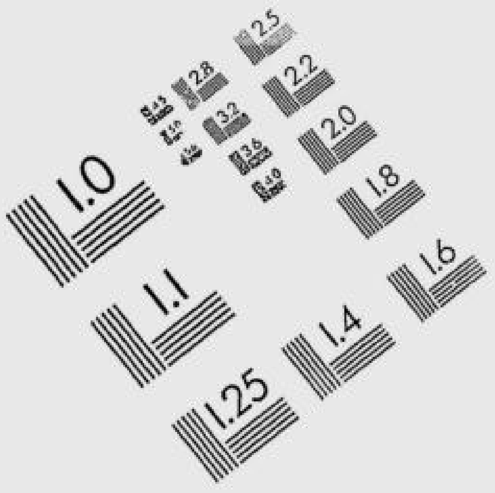
IMAGE EVALUATION
TEST TARGET (MT-3)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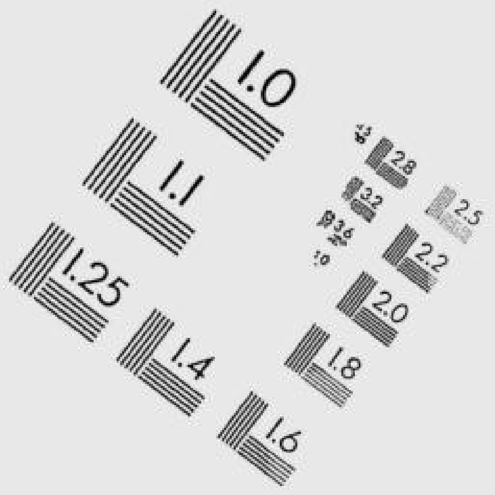
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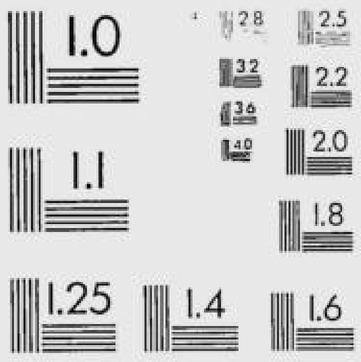
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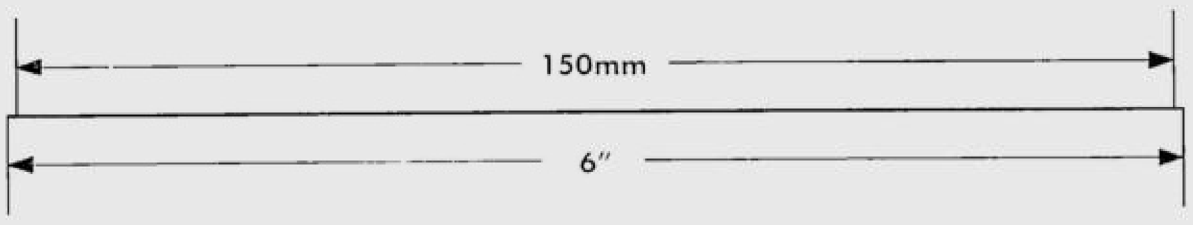

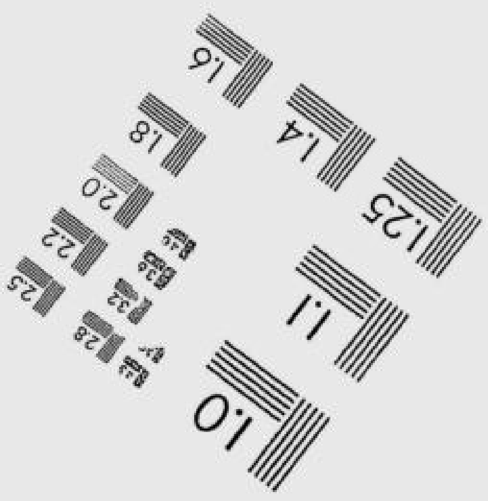
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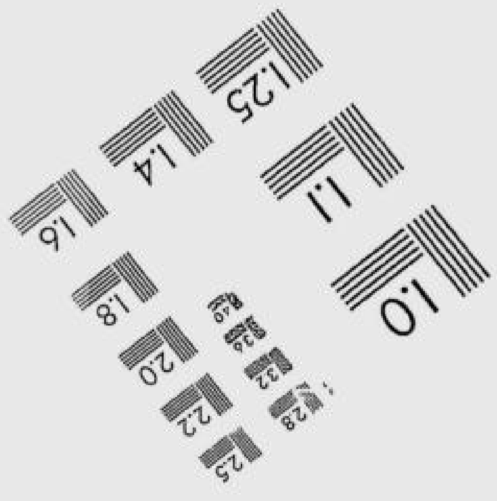
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